

# JUNIOR CERTIFICATE ENGLISH

## Guidelines for Teachers

### INTRODUCTION

The ideas and approaches outlined in these Guidelines will not be new to some teachers: to others they may appear unfamiliar and radical. Essentially the Junior Certificate syllabus and methodologies are an attempt to build on the best practice of the past to meet the challenge of a highly diversified constituency of students. Creative, integrated English teaching can provide a rich context for classroom work, easing the stress and resentment frequently occasioned by limited and prescribed courses. The new English syllabus invites the teacher to express his/her enthusiasm in a professional context, in dialogue with the needs of specific students.

Ideally, guidelines should arise out of tested classroom practice. These Guidelines have that affirmation and pedigree supporting them. It is hoped teachers will try out the recommendations made here in their own classrooms and report back their experiences so that the Guidelines can be revised in the light of those encounters.

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FOREWORD

There is a recognition of the need for guidelines to help teachers implement new syllabuses for the Junior Certificate. These guidelines are now being issued to schools as part of a wider programme of support. The Minister for Education wishes to express her appreciation of the work of the National Council for Curriculum and Assessment, of the members of the various course committees, of the Education Officers appointed by the Council and of others who have contributed to the development of these materials - in particular, the Inspectorate of her Department and the presenters and participants at the in-service courses held in Spring 1989.

These guidelines are not prescriptive. Each individual teacher is free to choose his or her preferred teaching methodology for the achievement of the specified objectives and desired outcomes of each new syllabus. These guidelines offer some suggestions which may be of further help to teachers. Particular attention is paid to areas of knowledge, understanding, skills, concepts and attitudes which the new syllabus highlights more than heretofore.

In that context, it is considered desirable to stress some important features which should inform the teaching and learning of the new syllabus -

each syllabus should be taught with conscious reference to the overall aims of the Junior Certificate programme (see inside front cover). Numerous opportunities exist for cross-curriculum linkages: these should be exploited through collective teacher planning and through individual teacher initiative;

teaching practice should highlight the economic, social and cultural implications of Ireland's membership of the European Community and the challenges and opportunities which this provides within a wider context of citizenship. Subjects such as Business Studies and History and Geography are particularly important in this sense but all subject-teaching should incorporate this European dimension.

in Geography and in Science, it is important that issues relating to the environment be treated in a balanced fashion as between the need to conserve and protect the natural environment and legitimate demands of economic development and industrial activity.

These guidelines are but one part of an overall programme of support for teachers. It is envisaged, for example, that in-service courses will focus on many issues which are raised in these guidelines.

The National Council for Curriculum and Assessment will consult with individual Subject Associations as to how best they might expand, develop and update preliminary lists of references and contacts which have been drawn up by course committees. These references would include books, videos, teaching-packs, computer software and other such material; teachers are advised to contact their particular Subject Association for further information.

SECTION A

The Content of the Junior Certificate  
English Syllabus

## WHAT IS TO BE TAUGHT?

At the centre of the syllabus is a series of skills, concepts and attitudes which give positive directions for the teaching of Junior Cycle English. These skills, concepts and attitudes are outlined for each year of the programme.

These are essentially the same skills, concepts and attitudes (with some additions) which were taught for the Intermediate Certificate in the context of prescribed texts.

The major difference in this new syllabus is that teachers are free to choose their own texts and materials to achieve the objectives of the programme. In their choice teachers are expected to choose materials from a wide range of literary genre along with other print and media material. Lists of material appropriate to each year are outlined in this handbook. These lists are neither prescriptive nor exhaustive.

Teachers should design their own programme appropriate to their students by integrating freely chosen texts with skills and concepts in syllabus units.

A syllabus unit is a selection of concepts and skills in literature and language organised about a chosen focus (Texts, Theme, Genre, Language forms/functions) which gives purpose and direction to a part of a programme in English.

Over the three years of the programme teachers are expected to teach six substantial syllabus units. Units should be designed and planned to suit the ability level of the students.

Typically then a teacher might plan a course (in co-ordination with his/her colleagues in English) in a variety of ways. Over the three years of the course the teacher should ensure that the students repeatedly encounter all the literary genre (poetry, prose, plays, novels, short stories and media material) in a variety of units. The choice, structure and approach in a syllabus unit will be very much dependent on the teacher's perception of student needs in the personal, social and cultural domains of language.

For example

Teacher A may choose Three fiction units  
Two drama units  
One mass media unit

Teacher B may choose Three drama units  
Two fiction units  
One language unit

Teacher C may choose Three thematic units  
Two language units  
One poetry unit

Teacher D may choose One media unit  
One thematic unit  
One language unit  
One poetry unit  
One short story unit  
One fiction unit

Teacher E may choose One local studies unit  
One prose unit  
One poetry unit  
Two fiction units  
One drama unit

Illustrative examples of a variety of units are contained in Section C of these Guidelines.

The variations in unit choice are endless. But because of the integrated approach advocated, each teacher irrespective of the units chosen will cover the same concepts and skills at a level appropriate to his/her students, through the text's and materials they have chosen.

Assessment will be based on the student's ability to use the skills listed and to demonstrate an understanding of the concepts listed. The approach to assessment will reflect and reinforce the philosophy of the syllabus.

*FIRST YEAR ENGLISH*Targets and Activities

To facilitate the transition from first to second level education, students in the first year of the English course should be encouraged to use, explore, develop, and refine the language that is most immediate and closest to themselves. The orientation of first year teaching will be towards building the student's confidence in language-use in a range of concrete and familiar personal, social and cultural contexts.

## LANGUAGE

Students should be confirmed and developed in their understanding of:

- the forms and structures of sentences and paragraphs
- the basic punctuation conventions
- language awareness e.g. nouns, adjectives, verbs and adverbs
- a range of spelling patterns
- a sense of register and audience

## LITERATURE

Students should be able to use these concepts and terms with understanding to facilitate the expression of their personal response to literary experiences or media experiences. These concepts will provide an overall framework for the teaching of a wide range of literary or media genre. The treatment of these concepts must allow for the ability and aptitude of the students concerned.

- hero/heroine/villain
- conflicts, tensions, climax
- point-of-view
- characters and relationships
- scenes and story-shape
- sounds, textures and rhythms of words
- style and word selection
- sensationalism and realism

Students should encounter these concepts of language and literature neither as isolated abstractions nor in the form of absolute definition. These concepts should be introduced gradually by the teacher, to facilitate students' personal interaction with material and class discussion of material.

the above conceptual core should be integrated with a selection from the following range of language activities.

#### ORAL AND AURAL SKILLS

Students should be encouraged to -

- tell personal anecdote; report another person's anecdote.
- engage in conversation in pairs and small groups on familiar and topical issues.
- talk on telephone; report telephone conversation.
- give and receive instructions and directions.
- describe and report on events, places and people.
- interview and question at a factual level.
- comment on appropriately chosen television and radio material.
- participate in interpretative oral approaches to literary experiences, e.g. group-readings, choral verse and script-reading.
- improvise in simple dramatic situations.
- discuss aspects of other students' written work.

#### READING SKILLS

Students should be encouraged to -

- read own written work for revising and editing purposes.
- read other students' written work for the purposes of commentary and revision.
- read silently for a variety of particular purposes, e.g. gather facts, seek information, find evidence, discover details, establish viewpoint, give affective/imaginative response.
- use a range of reference resources, e.g. dictionaries, indices, encyclopaedias, timetables, catalogues.
- read newspapers and journals attending to the selectivity of words, images and general presentation.
- view television programmes attending to the selectivity of words, images and general presentation.
- read and respond to a range of literary genre; develop and awareness of the significance of sound, texture and rhythm.
- respond to cloze-testing and sequencing procedures.

## WRITING SKILLS

Students should be introduced to the four basic procedures involved in all substantial writing contexts:

- Prewriting: discussion, making notes, brainstorming, drafting.
- Writing: first rough draft, initial plan and paragraphing.
- Rewriting: redraft and revise as necessary.
- Editing: proofreading for errors in style, syntax, spelling, and punctuation.

Students should be encouraged to engage in these procedures continually so they come to experience that the writing process is a thinking process. The act of writing is to be seen as an exploratory process - the student can, through words discover his/her own ideas, feelings and viewpoint. Writing is at best a process of self-definition in relation to a given topic or subject.

Students should be encouraged to engage in the following forms of written discourse:

- . give information in short cogent notes.
- . compose captions, headlines and titles.
- fill in a variety of application forms.
- report on event.
- describe in a variety of forms places, events, and people.
- write personal letter; write letter requesting/giving information.
- keep journal/diary on a range of experiences.
- write coherent narrative about self; compose fictional narrative.
- write simple dialogue or play-script.
- write in simple verse forms.
- review literature read privately or read in class.
- review films, television material and videos.
- write commentary and give response to aspects of literary and media experiences.
- engage in word-play to increase familiarity with the linguistic conventions of spellings, punctuation, grammar and syntax.

Some Suggested Resources

**A. NOVELS**

The Midnight Fox	B. Byars
The Eighteenth Emergency	B. Byars
The Iron Man	T. Hughes
The Boy Who Was Afraid	A. Sperry
The Shrinking of Treehorn	F. Heide
The Red Pony	J. Steinbeck
The Cay	T. Taylor
I am David	A. Holm
The Twelfth of July	J. Lingard
Kes	B. Hines
The Children of the Oregon Trail	R. Van der Loeff
The Summer of My German Soldier	B. Greene
Henry's Log	A. Pilling
The Eagle of the Ninth	R. Sutcliffe
The Ghost of Thomas Kempe	P. Lively
The Whispering Knights	P. Lively
In a Blue Velvet Dress	C. Sefton
The Machine Gunners	R. Westall
Under Goliath	P. Carter
The Nargun and the Stars	P. Wrightson
The Great Gilly Hopkins	K. Paterson
Jacob, Have I Loved	K. Paterson
Bridge to Terabithia	K. Paterson
Role of Thunder, Hear my Cry	M. Taylor
The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe	C.S. Lewis
Walkabout	J. V. Marshall
The Hobbit	J. R. Tolkien
The Hounds of the Morrigan	P. O'Shea
Danny, Champion of the World	R. Dahl
Goodnight, Mr. Tom	M. Magorian
The Runways	V. Canning
Flight of the Doves	W. Macken
Island of the Great Yellow Ox	W. Macken
Viking Princess	M. Mullen
The Coriander	E. Dillon
Irish Tales and Sagas	U. O'Connor
The Secret Diary of Adrian Mole	S. Townsend
The Diddakoi	R. Godden

**B. ANTHOLOGIES OF SHORT STORIES**

Meetings and Partings	M. Marland (Longman Imprint)
Loves, Hopes and Fears	M. Marland (Longman Imprint)
The Goalkeeper's Revenge	Bill Naughton (Puffin)
The Lucky Bag	P. Donlon & p. Egan (O'Brien Press)
A Thief in the Night	James Berry (Puffin)
Exploring English i	A. Martin (Gill & Macmillan)
The Shadow Cage	Phillipa Pearce (Puffin)
What the Neighbours Did	P. Pearce
The Fib and Other Sto-ies	G. Layton (Longman)
The Balaclava Story and Other Stories	G. Layton (Longman)
I Like This Story (novel extracts)	K. Webb (Puffin)
Tales from the Edge of the World	M. Riley (BBC)
Story Plus Books i & 2	R. Jones (Heinemann Ed)
The Wild Ride and other Scottish Stories	G. Jarvie (Puffin)
The Genius and other Irish Stories	G. Jarvie (Puffin)
The Pedlar's Revenge and Other Stories	L. O'Flaherty

**C. POETRY ANTHOLOGIES**

*Golden Apples	Fiona Waters (Heinemann)
I Like This Poem	Kay Webb (Puffin)
*A Puffin Book of Verse	E. Graham (Puffin)
The Puffin Book of Magic Verse	C. Causley (Puffin)
*The Wolfhound Book of Irish Verse	Quinn & Cashmann (Wolfhound)
Exploring English 3	A. Martin (Gill)
I Like That Stuff	Ed. Morag Styles (Cambridge)
You'll Love This Stuff	Ed. Morag Styles (Cambridge)

Poetry Anthologies contd.

*Poems	M. Harrison & C. Stuart-Clarke (Oxford)
Poem 2	M. Harrison & C. Stuart-Clarke (Oxford)
*The New Dragon Book of Verse	C. Harrison & C. Stuart-Clarke (Oxford)
The Rattle Bag	Heaney & Hughes (Faber)
The Lore and Language of School Children	Iona & Peter Opie (Oxford University Press)
The Poolbeg Book of Irish Verse	Sean Mac Mahon (Poolbeg)
Touchstones Books 1, 2 & 3	M. Benton & P. Benton

\* Suitable for class anthology if resources allow

**D. DRAMA**

The Windmill Series - (6 one-act plays)	(Heinemann)
Play Ten - 10 short plays	Edward Arnold
It's your choice - Six role-playing exercises	Michael Lynch (Edward Arnold)
Drama World Series	S. Fitzpatrick (Cambridge Educ.)
Plays Plus Series	(Collins Educational)
100+ Ideas for Drama	Scher & Verrall (Heinemann)
Another 100+ Ideas For Drama	Scher & Verrall (Heinemann)

## SECOND YEAR ENGLISH

### Targets and Activities

During the Second Year of the course, students should consolidate the progress made throughout the First Year through

- repetition of the skills in more challenging contexts
- development of a richer understanding of the concepts encountered
- exploration and application of these concepts in different contexts•

While the First Year emphasises language use in informal situations, and while this should remain important, the Second Year should challenge the students in more formal and demanding language situations•

### LANGUAGE:

Students should be confirmed and developed in their understanding of:

- the forms and structures of paragraphs and of more extended compositions.
- the basic punctuation conventions
- more complex spelling patterns
- more challenging sense of register, audience and purpose
- language awareness, e.g. prefixes, suffixes, root-words, pronouns, prepositions

### LITERATURE:

Students should be able to use these concepts and terms with understanding to facilitate the expression of their personal response to literary experiences or media experiences• These concepts will provide an overall framework for the teaching of a wide range of literary or media genre• The treatment of these concepts must allow for the ability and aptitude of the students concerned•

- contrast
- narrative voice
- character development and motivation
- beginnings and endings
- mood, atmosphere, tone, imagery and setting
- style, word-pattern and verbal choice, in all literature

- romance
- short-story, novel and play as literary forms

Students should encounter these concepts of language and literature neither as isolated abstractions nor in the form of absolute definition. These concepts should be introduced gradually by the teacher, to facilitate students' personal interaction with material and class discussion of material.

This conceptual core should be integrated with a selection from the following range of language activities.

#### ORAL AND AURAL SKILLS

Students should be encouraged to -

- Re-use the First Year activities
- Tell story (autobiographical or fictional) to group or class: record and dramatise narrative.
- Engage in reasoned debate on agreed topic: put forward opinion or hypothesis and support with evidence. Listen to other presentations and attempt to develop counter arguments.
- Give short public speech or presentation on personally chosen topic. Deal with questions on the topic from class audience. Make radio documentary with others on agreed topic.
- Ask questions in public addressed to peers or invited speakers. Questions may be litecal initially but should try to move into the areas of interpretation, evaluation and speculation.
- Cotament on, explore, interpret and evaluate media experiences. Discuss and re-create orally language strategies encountered in the mass media.
- Participate in a more sustained oral presentation of literary experiences.
- Improvise more extended conversation in more complex situations. Attempt more challenging role-plays.
- Attempt theatrical presentations of short scenes from texts.

#### READING SKILLS

Students should be encouraged to -

- Revise and readdress First Year activities.
- Read silently for a more sustained period of time for specific purposes, for pleasure, information, evidence.
- Engage in private independent reading in fictional and non-fictional prose. Report to class on material read.

- Read newspapers, journals, magazines attending to viewpoint, assumptions, accuracy of reporting and style of language. Contrast and evaluate the approach of a range of print-media. Comment on use of illustrations, cartoons and photographs.
- View TV programmes attended to the implicit values and assumptions presented. Comment on and evaluate the purpose of a variety of TV programmes.
- Read widely in a range of literary genre. Develop an awareness of the significance and impact of imagery, atmosphere, tone, mood and setting.

#### WRITING SKILLS

The student should be encouraged to -

- Write and rewrite, to develop craft of writing.
- Write a report on given topic.
- Write a range of formal letters, e.g. invitation, application, condolence, inquiry, gratitude.
- Devise application forms for specific purposes e.g. for job, membership.
- Devise advertisements brochures for a range of purposes and items.
- Write more complex narratives with more than two characters. Use specific setting and create mood.
- Write descriptive essay on chosen topic.
- Write argumentative essay on chosen topic.
- Compose alternative scenes in literary texts.
- Write in literary forms about a range of experiences.
- Write commentaries and evaluate significance of a range of literary and media experiences.

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Some Further Suggested Resources - Second Year

Carrie's War	Nina Bawden (Puffin)
The Fox in Winter	.John Branfield (Puffin)
The First of Midnight	Marjorie Darke (Puffin)
The Village by the Sea	Anita Desai (Puffin)
The Granny Project	Anne Fine (Puffin)
The Slave Dancer	Paula Fox (Puffin)
A Mouse and his Child	Russell Hoban
A Wrinkle in Time	Madelene L'Engle (Puffin)
A Wizard of Earth Sea	Ursula Le Guin (Puffin)
The Changeover	Margaret Mahy (Magnet)
Z for Zachariah	Robert O'Brien (Armada)
Island of the Strangers	Catherine Sefton
Shane	,lack Schaefer (Puffin)
Josh	Ivan Southall (Puffin)
Ash Road	Ivan Southall (Puffin)
Song for a Dark Queen	Rosemary Sutcliffe (Knight)
Warrior Scarlet	Rosemary Sutcliffe (Puffin)
A Stitch in Time	Penelope Lively
Let the Circle be Unbroken	Mildren Taylor (Puffin)
A Solitary Blue	Cynthia Voight (Collins)
Talking in Whispers	James Watson (Armada)
The Freedom Tree	James Watson (Armada)
The Scarecrows	Robert Westall (Puffin)

Poetry & Short Stories: As in First Year lists.

**Drama**

The Tinker's Wedding	J. M. Synge
Riders to the Sea	J. M. Synge
The Shadow of a Gumnán	S. O'Casey
On the Outside	T. Murphy
The Pot of Broth	W. B. Yeats
The Proposal	A. Chekov
Julius Caesar	W. Shakespeare
The Merchant of Venice	W. Shakespeare
Henry IV P I	W. Shakespeare
Romeo & Juliet	W. Shakespeare
The Royal Hunt of the Sun	Peter Schaefer

### THIRD YEAR ENGLISH

#### Targets and Activities

The Third Year involves re-encountering at more challenging levels, all the skills and concepts encountered during the first two years. At this level it would be expected that the student should be able to exhibit more confidence, expertise and understanding in all the domains of language experience.

Students will have encountered a broad range of skills and concepts during the previous two years. This year should be seen as providing the opportunity to exercise and apply the expertise gained and so build up confidence in his/her own response and ability to use words accurately and appropriately.

#### LANGUAGE

Students should be confirmed and developed in their ability to -

- develop basic vocabulary to discuss language use: the grammatical terms, and such terms as phrase, connotation, cliché, synonym, register, audience.
- identify manipulative language techniques.
- recognise appropriate and inappropriate use of style and register.
- be aware of strategies for spelling and punctuation procedures.

#### LITERATURE

Students should be able to use these concepts and terms with understanding, to facilitate the expression of their personal response to literary experiences or media experiences. These concepts will provide an overall framework for the teaching of a wide range of literary or media genre. The treatment of these concepts must allow for the ability and aptitude of the students concerned.

- plot
- comedy
- tragedy
- satire
- pathos
- melodrama
- theatre
- lyrical and narrative
- tone and irony
- symbolism

Students should encounter these concepts of language and literature neither as isolated abstractions nor in the form of absolute definitions. These concepts should be introduced gradually by the teacher, to facilitate students' personal interaction with material and class discussion of material.

This conceptual core should be integrated with a selection from the following range of language activities.

ORAL AND AURAL SKILLS

The student should be encouraged to -

- Talk and listen in a wide range of contexts both formal and informal, including all activities suggested for first and second year.

READING

Students should be encouraged to -

- Identify types of logical order, chronological, spatial, order of importance.
- Identify a writer's purpose in a given passage, to inform, entertain, persuade, inspire.
- Draw conclusions, predict outcomes and suggest implications.
- Be aware of narrative stance of author, first person, third person, varied, omniscient.
- Distinguish between fact and opinion.
- Identify in material encountered forms of stereo typing, sex, age, race occupation, nationality, religion.

WRITING

Students should be encouraged to -

- Write more extended compositions in a wide range of contexts.
- Show clear awareness of variety of audience, purpose and register.

Some Further Suggested Resources - Third Year

Things Fall Apart	C. Achebe
Pride and Prejudice	J. Austen
Oliver Twist	C. Dickens
The Old Man and the Sea	E. Hemingway
How many miles to Babylon	J. Johnston
A Separate Peace	J. Knowles
To Kill a Mocking Bird	H. Lee
Lamb	B. McLaverty
Cal	B. McLaverty
The Country Girls	E. O'Brien
The Prime of Miss Jean Brodie	M. Spark
Of Mice and Men	J. Steinbeck
The Day of the Triffids	J. Wyndham
Fahrenheit 451	R. Bradbury
The Grapes of Wrath	J. Steinbeck
Cry, The Beloved Country	A. Paton

Poetry/Short Stories: As in First Year.

Drama Resources: As in Second Year.

SECTION B

Classroom Approaches

## CLASSROOM APPROACHES TO TALKING

### Stance

When the student enters the first year of post-primary school, it is of fundamental importance that respect be shown for his/her personal accent and individual register. It would be inappropriate to impose an absolute standard of correctness on all speech activity in the classroom isolated from its purpose, audience and situation. Each English teacher will have to decide his/her stance in the context but flexibility may achieve more for language growth in the long term than adherence to a dogmatic position in all circumstances. The role of the English teacher is not to reject a student's language register but to extend language options and help him/her to gain access to as wide a range of registers as possible.

### Basic Principles

The emphasis in the syllabus on developing the student's skill in talking offers an opportunity for teachers to engage in much interesting work. Success in this area is very much dependent on

- creating an appropriate context for talk
- giving well directed tasks
- emphasising tangible results and outcomes.

### planning

As with all language, growth in talking skills will only occur when the students feel there is a real purpose to the activity. Students engaging in discussion in a random unstructured manner are achieving nothing. It isn't a matter of the teacher sitting back and letting them at it - it is essentially necessary for the teacher to plan a course covering a range of skills, purposes, registers and audiences, provided by the Activity Programme outlined for that year.

### Tasks

Effective work in developing talking skills can take place in the three domains of language. Typical tasks might be as follows:

#### Personal Domain:

- Brainstorm (speculate randomly aloud) on given issues;
- Engage in dialogue for a variety of purposes;
- Respond emotionally and imaginatively to literary experiences;
- Tell anecdote;
- Role-play in imagined personal and interactive contexts.

Social Domain:

- Interview adult;
- Make presentation to group or class on chosen topic;
- Formulate to questions, opinions, arguments;
- Make formal phone-call for information;
- Role-play in a series of formal, social roles e.g. interview for position, speeches of welcome, gratitude, condolence, etc.

Cultural Domain:

- Make oral presentation in a range of literary and media genre;
- Speak verse individually, in pairs, in groups;
- Read aloud in an interpretative manner from texts;
- Develop elementary skills of reader's theatre;
- Make recording of presentations and present to other groups.

Obviously this listing is not exhaustive but it serves to indicate the diversity of tasks which are possible.

Teacher's Role

In many cases developing talking skills implies a re-grouping of the usual class structure and a change in the role of the teacher in relation to the students. Fundamentally, the teacher must try to speak less and listen more. The role of the teacher changes from being the source of answers, information and meaning to that of facilitator and motivator of student learning. The students are engaged in actively making meaning rather than accepting received meaning from the teacher. The teacher's role then is to create the context, give the purpose and direction of the activity and be available to guide, speculate, question and suggest. This is a most sophisticated role requiring much creative listening and opportunistic intervention. Teachers unused to this type of approach will not become instantly proficient in this role. It is, nevertheless, a role that is learnt by doing and gradually developing a personal technique of management and discipline.

Student Role

Students are being challenged in more direct terms within the classroom than has previously occurred. This involves the teachers appraising the students of the need for mutual respect and attempting to build an atmosphere of civil co-operation within the classroom. (This is of fundamental importance obviously for the development of listening skills).

Easier said than done. Perhaps in some cases it is going to take a long time. The success in achieving this desired class co-operation depends very much on the nature and direction of the tasks given in the first place. If the students don't perceive the task as real and meaningful then there is little hope of success. The use of diversity of audience and the statement of a clear purpose for all oral work is also decidedly helpful.

## GETTING STARTED

Initially each teacher will have to decide what he/she can manage keeping in mind the nature and aptitudes of the students being taught: some might find it best to start with individual anecdotes, others with pairs, others with groupwork. Because the student needs time to grow into this as well, the informal structure of pairs or small groups (3 or 4) will be the most suitable place to begin. [It should also involve very little disruption of desks and class furniture - an important consideration].

### Pair or group work

In approaching such work a few basic ground rules (endlessly adaptable to individual circumstances of teacher, pupil and classroom) might be useful.

Teachers should,

Plan pairs/groups beforehand (useful for discipline purposes)  
Appoint (or get them to choose) a chairperson, recorder, presenter in each group. These roles should vary so each student experiences each role on different occasions; each role involves a different verbal challenge and a learning opportunity for the students.

Give definite (but reasonable) time span for tasks: don't let it dawdle on, better to chop than leave it linger to a slow and unsatisfactory end.

Outline definite task (or series of tasks) for group.

Specify quite clearly outcome required. It is best to put these instructions on display (on black-board/overhead/work card) otherwise the instructions are quickly misremembered, misinterpreted or just not followed. Typical tasks might be as follows,

- (a) Answer certain questions - vary standard of questions accordingly to context and ability: suggest literal, interpretative, appreciative, evaluative approaches as appropriate.
- (b) Compose questions - again vary standard of question expected from group: begin with the literal but if possible urge them on to more speculative questions.
- (c) Form an opinion - having read or listened to a text or presentation.
- (d) Gather evidence - from text: e.g. newspapers, magazines, brochures.
- (e) Compose Joint Narrative
- (f) Plan argument - take up position and justify it.
- (g) Plan procedures and instructions

- (h) Prepare oral presentation or interpretation of literary work.
- (i) Plan improvisation.
- (j) Prepare advertisement for particular item.

Always allow sufficient time for outcome to be heard by someone: teacher should circulate to all groups during discussion time to ensure something is happening!

Obviously work like this is a sufficient end in itself but it is also ideal preparation for written work. This should not always be the inevitable outcome but it remains a valuable and worthwhile option since "all written artefacts float on a sea of talk".

### **Anecdote and story-telling**

"We turn our pain into story so we can bear it, we turn our ecstasy into story so that we can prolong it" - John Shea (Stories of God).

Narrative is the most immediate way in which we place order on our experiences, in which we make sense of ourselves and our lives. Story-telling is the backbone of most social encounters varying from monologues, to interacting group, to racy jokes. Most people enjoy telling stories about themselves (each time they tell it gets more interesting), and as a nation we are famous for our ability to compose stories of surprising possibilities. Ample time should be made available in classrooms to allow students to develop the ability to tell of themselves and their experiences, real or imagined, in an interesting manner.

### Student Interest in Narrative

While story-telling has always been an implicit part of English teaching (remember the student who persists in telling incredibly long stories) it has now been given a high profile and emphasised as a valued mode of presentation and response for students. Teachers should have little difficulty motivating students in this area of presentation and expression: the problem may be getting them to stop and be coherent rather than lack of actual material.

### Growth in Storying

Perhaps beginning in pairs, students might exchange autobiographical anecdotes (a simple incident) funny or otherwise, according to task given by the teacher. Students might then be asked to report their partner's anecdote to the rest of the class, always a source of consternation. (This needs sensitive handling in some cases and teacher discretion is important here to save embarrassment and exposure). As experience is gained the group can be enlarged for the initial encounter.

## **Individual Differences**

Obviously this story-telling activity inhabits that common area of language where the personal and cultural domains overlap. For many students the ability to tell about a personal happening will always remain a tentative, exploratory activity; for others this activity will eventually develop into the ability to tell a powerful story to an audience in the best tradition of the seanchal.

### Teacher Help

Irrespective of student's ability in this area teachers can help them to organise their narratives by encouraging them to answer simple preparatory questions. Again this must be treated with sensitivity by the teacher; this is meant as an aid to story-tellers not an imprisoning rigid formula.

The check-list of the five W-questions are a practical guideline for story-tellers while preparing their material.

What happened?  
Who was involved?  
When did it happen?  
Where did it happen?  
Why did it happen?

How the students utilise the W-questions is their own concern: which order they arrange them in or do they omit some, is a matter of individual decision. If the story works then such a formula becomes totally irrelevant; if the story doesn't work, then they become creative questions a student can ask in order to improve storying the next time.

Besides individuals telling stories, interesting and challenging oral work can be carried out in this context by inviting groups or a whole class to co-operate in telling a story.

### Group Story

The initial stimulus to create the imaginative context for the story can vary enormously e.g. picture, sound, literary/media experience and so on. Each group plans its story and then each person in the group narrates a part of the story to the class. This is useful for getting a good sense of shape to the story, i.e. beginning, middle, end; if there are three people in the group they can each tell a section of the story.

### **Prepare a Talk for the class**

#### Formal Talk

Over the course of a year each pupil could be invited once/twice to prepare a talk for presentation to the class. The topic of the talk could be personally chosen, arising from the unit being studied, a

view of an author, character, place, scene. If the student preferred he/she could give a talk on a personal interest. Length of talk, variable but initially 5 - 10 minutes.

This is a challenging exercise for many pupils so it would have to be prepared well with the help of the teacher. The type of tasks to be tackled by the student would be basically similar to those encountered in writing a composition i.e.

- (i) Gathering Ideas;
- (ii) Deciding a Viewpoint;
- (iii) Organising Material;
- (iv) Making a First Draft - speaking from notes - (not reading out a text).
- (v) At this point the teacher's intervention would be necessary to act as a substitute audience and help the student through response to improve the layout, thinking and general oral presentation. Obvious faults like speaking too fast, not enough illustrations, improving the shape could be indicated.
- (vi) Finally the students could present the redrafted talk. Initially perhaps it might be wiser to allow no questions in response from the class, but as students become more accustomed to the idea of giving these talks questions could be allowed with some monitoring by the teacher or another student.

#### Talk Games

Other less formal approaches to develop talking skills could be through speech-games

- (i) Talk for a minute on a given topic
- (ii) Yes and No game
- (iii) Complete a sentence in a group: each person has just one word to say.

Games like this could be played regularly to introduce a class to oral work or to sharpen up language awareness and concentration in different contexts.

### **Interview Question and answer**

This oral task can be applied in a range of different contexts by the students.

- (i) Interview each other for a specific reason and then report to class.
- (ii) Interview parents, grand-parents, other teachers, other chosen adults (priests, plumbers, poets, etc.). These could be invited to the school.
- (iii) Role-play interview in a variety of circumstances: a class could be a press-conference for a character from literature e.g. Falstaff, Huck Finn.
- (iv) Present a recording of any one of these sessions as a radio-programme.
- (v) Role play a court-room scene: where each member of the class has a specific role, judge, lawyers, clerks, jury, witnesses, accused, etc. A character from literature could be put on trial.

APPLICATION OF THESE IDEAS TO SPECIFIC TEXTS

Possible oral tasks based on First Confession, F, O'Connor or Confirmation Suit, B. Behan for First Year.

- (i) Tell anecdote of incidents which caused you embarrassment and frustration when you were younger.
- (ii) Ask parents/grand-parents/any adult for story from their youth: tell to group next day.
- (iii) Compose anecdote (with beginning, middle and end) about ghost returning to warn the living about the quality of their lives. Compose interesting title and present in group format to class.
- (iv) Group Discussion Tasks: choose from the following
  - (a) What character did you like most/least?
  - (b) What part of the story did you enjoy most? (Prepare reading of it).
  - (c) What did you feel about the ending? Could you give an alternative ending?
  - (d) Is there any person, scene in the story you would like to know more about. Compose your own addition to the story to fill the 'gap' you feel is there.
  - (e) Did you have a final feeling or image from the story.
  - (f) Trace in diagram the way your feelings went through the story.
- (v) Improvise/role-play in pairs, encounters between characters on given topic:
  - (a) Nora and Grandmother; discuss money or Jackie.
  - (b) Priest and 'woman from Montenotte': discuss Hell/Heaven.
  - (c) The grandmothers from the different stories meet: discuss food/drink/grandsons.
- (vi) Give short talk to class on the topic of Sisters and Brothers.

POSSIBLE ORAL TASKS FROM THE GUESTS OF THE NATION (THIRD YEAR)

Group Discussion

- (i) Come to group consensus opinion about behaviour of J. O'Donovan.
- (ii) Does this story have significance for today. Present group viewpoint to class.
- (iii) Trace a graph of tension in the story. Display and explain shape of graph to class.
- (iv) Comment on the different language style of the characters. How do they add to the story?

### Role-play/Improvise

- (a) Press Conference with Republican chiefs on killing of Belcher and Hawkins: Compose short radio report subsequently.
- (b) Bonaparte and Jeremiah O'Donovan meet many years later: improvise conversation.
- (c) Noble visits Hawkins' mother.
- (d) J. O'Donovan meets Belcher's child (O'Donovan is a life-prisoner: Belcher's child is a prison doctor).
- (e) Chose particular scene: present in reader's theatre format, i.e. reading texts, some gestures and facial expression, symbolic props.

### Story/Anecdote

Let all the class be inhabitants of the town that is sited close to the scene of the killing. Let each tell in turn their knowledge of a part of the story. (A complex task but a great generator of interesting characters, viewpoints and interpretations). Typical roles might be priest, vicar, doctor, blacksmith, teacher, shopkeeper, courting people, bar-man, butcher, poacher, nun, nurse and so on.

**CLASSROOM APPROACHES**

TO

**LISTENING**

LISTENING

It is artificial to separate the development of talking and listening skills. Much of the work outlined previously is obviously heavily dependent on listening. However, it is possible to focus on developing particular kinds of listening skills in different contexts.

Many students are unused to listening attentively: in fact many students do not really know how to listen. The English teacher's task is to train them into the various stances and strategies which can be adopted for successful listening in a variety of aural experiences.

Making Meaning

Effective listening is a form of active interpretation and reception: it is a form of making meaning through language. This meaning construction can (as with reading) occur at different levels of comprehension and understanding, e.g. literal, inferential,

evaluative. Students need to be gradually introduced to perceiving the different levels of meaning in any encounter. To develop these approaches, the fundamental principle of language skills being learnt in a purposeful and meaningful context applies equally strongly. For the teacher to choose a passage randomly and read it to the class, and subsequently ask a series of questions fosters little growth in the student's listening skills.

While reading and listening are obviously alike in many ways the major difference is the transience of the listening experience. In reading it is possible to re-read, the same text searching for specifics; but in listening students will rarely have the opportunity in life situations to re-hear something; they need to develop approaches which will help them to quickly establish the necessary meaning in given situations.

There are three elements in every listening experience:

- Reception

This means that students must hear accurately the words being said. They must be in a position to hear distinctly not alone the words, but how they are being said as well. Tone of voice in speaking may convey more than surface verbal content.

- Comprehension

This relates to the making of meaning out of what has been received. This making of meaning in the listening situation is highly selective. Everything in a statement generally cannot and will not be understood in any one encounter so selective purposeful attention is called for.

One can listen for a diverse range of purposes, for

- information and evidence
- instructions and directions
- answers
- persuasion
- entertainment
- interaction and confirmation
- critical purposes

These purposes for listening clearly spread throughout the three domains of language in various degrees of intensity: entertainment would have a very high presence in the cultural domain. Likewise instructions and directions would be vital in the social domain; they would be of less moment in the personal domain.

- Response

In response to any of the above purposes the following outcomes are possible,

- (i) To do - to perform an action of some kind
- (ii) To learn - to grow in awareness
- (iii) To comment - to dialogue with what has been heard

This outline model of the listening act provides the teacher with some directions on how to develop the required strategies of attention in the students.

#### Strategies

- i. Give clear simple one-idea task appropriate to the ability of the students e.g.

- (i) What's being said about ..... factual/literal
- (ii) How many people were ....
- (iii) Who is speaking - viewpoint
- (iv) Who is being addressed - audience
- (v) Why is it being said - purpose
- (vi) How is it being said - tone, style
- (vii) What did you think of - evaluate

2. Suggest a strategy to students for approaching the given assignment. They could, depending on the purpose given be advised to:

focus  
expect and anticipate  
re-consider and recall  
organise and link

- In some situations it will be desirable that the students should be encouraged to engage in 'active' listening i.e. stopping the speaker and asking a question to clarify something. This kind of activity should not be interpreted as implying a lack of attention on the student's part - it is more accurately interpreted to suggest concentration and interest.

4. Retention

Where intervention and clarification questions are not possible then it would seem useful to take brief notes during the listening. This of course may cause all kinds of difficulties and needs to be handled carefully for pre-occupation with notes implies frequently lack of attentive listening and therefore missing more than is gained.

### Class Pattern

The pattern of a class in listening then might usefully follow this pattern.

1. Create context (within a unit).
2. (a) Give assignment  
(b) Give purpose  
(c) Suggest strategy
3. Present recording or reading. Take questions after reading and revise purpose of assignment.
4. Replay or re-read.
5. Allow time for re-organising and patterning and then ask for oral responses.
6. Record in written form outcome of experience.

### Application of Ideas and Suggestions

1. Context: Mass Media Unit  
  
Assignment: To listen to radio/tape of advertisement  
  
Purpose: What words catch your attention in the advertisement  
  
Strategy: Link and recall  
  
Play tape - revise purpose: (allow brief time for notes: if necessary replay tape)  
  
Response: Take lists from students;/list on blackboard: discuss the power of the words.  
  
Outcome: Possibly suggest they compose advertisement on product using 'surprising' words.
2. Context: Story in Animal Unit: The Trout, S. O'Faolain  
  
Assignment: To listen to story being read  
  
Purpose: How many important decisions were made and by whom?  
  
Strategy: Focus and anticipate  
  
Response: Read story. Gather views on assignment purpose. List ideas about significance of decision in character's life.  
  
Outcome: Write character sketch

3. Context: Poem: variety of interpretation
- Assignment: To listen to two students' separate reading of same poem
- Purpose: Identify differences in emphasis and interpretation.
- Strategy: Re-call and consider
- First Student - reads poem - give brief time for notes.  
Second Student - reads poem - give time for organisation.
- Response: Collect views on approaches of the students.
- Outcome: Reading of poem in pairs/groups.

**CLASSROOM APPROACHES**

TO

**READING**

Reading at Second Level

The new English syllabus emphasises the necessity of teaching a wide range of reading skills. Many teachers at second level may feel that these reading skills should have been taught in primary school and that secondary teachers have other responsibilities.

But learning to read is not just a skill that is learnt once and then achieved for ever like riding a bicycle. Learning to read is on the contrary a continuous process; we learn to read continually adjusting to different contexts, registers and purposes. It is this ability to adjust to the kind of text being read and to develop strategies in students for coping with a wide range of texts is the responsibility of the teacher of English at second level. Furthermore since reading can take place at various levels of understanding it is the role of the English teacher to help the student to generate more understanding in relation to all the texts encountered.

Most students in secondary school will have learnt the basic reading skills and will be quite competent in many areas. However, some students will still have difficulties in basic reading skills, and co-operation between the English teacher and the remedial teacher is desirable in this context. Furthermore there will be some students who are not classified as needing remedial education who will need special attention to develop reading competence. Relative to these students English teachers would need to be aware of:

- some diagnostic skills and procedures to identify individual's specific difficulties
- the reading-age of all these students.
- approaches for helping these students to become more literate.

## Deflnition of Reading

Reading has been defined as "a psycho-linguistic guessing game". (Goodman): not perhaps a very informative definition, but it suggests appropriately some of the complexity of the activity. Reading cannot be identified with 'decoding', identifying the words and sounding them with little apprehension of meaning. Reading always implies meaning, reading is an act of making meaning; it is not a passive receptive activity but a creative interpretative attack on a text which generates meaning through interaction. The role of the secondary teacher is to provide students with the various strategies which facilitates this interactive encounter with the written text.

## Reading must be meaningful

The first condition for teaching reading successfully is to ensure the material being encountered by the student invites him/her into the challenge of reading in a personally meaningful way; reading instruction is best carried on in a purposeful context with an appreciable outcome for the student. Without these conditions the reader has no real motivation for approaching the text; he/she will be reading for practice not for a purpose and therefore as always the minimum is learnt and reading as an experience is devalued.

## Developing Basic Reading Skills

Various procedures can be adopted for helping pupils to construct meaning from texts. For those who have basic problems then such activities as:

- Cloze procedures
- Sequencing
- Prediction
- Vocabulary building through games
- Using context clues
- Directed, limited comprehension tasks

will be found useful and rewarding.

Likewise these students need to be immersed in printed material of diverse interest. The list of texts suggested may be beyond their scope therefore alternative texts of more popular appeal should be introduced. The important objective is help these students to read for pleasure and profit. Teachers should feel free to use any material they consider useful and suitable for achieving this fundamental purpose. Syllabus Units can be constructed about this material quite readily.

## Keeping the Balance

Students who have difficulty with basic skills are a particular challenge for the English teacher at second level. The danger is that teachers understandably concerned about low standards will concentrate on functional language learning at the expense of the imaginative and affective encounter with suitable material. This would be most unwise, contradicting the integrated language policy

of the syllabus and imposing an arid reductionism on the English experience of these students. Of all the students in our schools, these need desperately to encounter words and language-experiences which will enthuse them with a respect for words because of the pleasure and excitement they felt in hearing the teacher read or in trying to read themselves.

Since some children with reading difficulties come from environments with little or no printed material present it is vital for the teacher to read to the pupils a great deal: not only literature, but newspapers, magazines, anything which will confer value on the act and the effort it takes in the eyes of the students. Students learn from models, they imitate models, so the teacher in his/her approach should be a model of inquiry, interest, pleasure and satisfaction in relation to the reading material. Like much else in education reading may be caught rather than taught.

While basically the same skills are required in the three domains of language the sophisticated level of these skills that is required for reading for pleasure and satisfaction particularly in the domains of social and cultural literacy can be daunting and should be taught deliberately and systematically. (cf. programme of activities in reading).

#### READING IN THE PERSONAL DOMAIN

As with all language skills, this is the area in which confidence and value in reading can be established. The basic skills of reading can be greatly helped by encouraging students to look at their own and other students' writing as reading-texts. Reading that context can achieve a wide range of purposes, by relating it directly to their own use of words and helping them to experience meaning creation in an informal non-threatening context. Later the use of this language-experience approach to developing reading can be effectively applied to developing writing skills in the area of revising, editing and proof-reading their own work. Making a reading collection from a class's own texts provides an admirable resource for enriching this kind of approach. The students can begin to see themselves in the role of authors and therefore able to recognise that the work of other writers exists on the same continuum of writing as their own, albeit at a more sophisticated level.

#### READING IN THE SOCIAL DOMAIN

For students in second level school, this is the area of most challenge to their reading skills. In the past perhaps, English teachers have been less than attentive to the actual reading demands made in this area, which are paramount for coping with the practical reading demands of life.

## English on Service Role: developing study skills

Furthermore in this domain English teachers have an important service role to play in relation to other subjects and their text-books. Just as the remedial teacher should be in contact with all other teachers with respect to certain students so the English teacher should be in a position to appraise other subject teachers of the approach needed to ensure that students can read a particular text-book meaningfully. The development of a coherent school policy about language in the classroom and the teaching of reading and writing would be most desirable.

This kind of reading has been categorised in a general way as "efferent" reading [L. Rosenblatt]: reading which is directly concerned with establishing facts, evidence, ideas, directions, procedures and processes to be integrated into the reader's awareness.

Teaching students to read for these purposes involves them in such activities as:

- finding the main topic or idea
- finding supporting ideas as evidence
- distinguishing between fact, anecdote, illustration, comment, explanation
- listing facts in their own words - paraphrasing
- notetaking and summarising
- re-reading and reflecting
- outlining steps in a process in verbal or diagrammatic form
- questioning the text
- developing awareness of,
  - paragraph structure
  - link words e.g. but, although, nevertheless etc.
  - margin headings
  - general layout
- increasing vocabulary through using verbal and context clues
- learning and re-defining accurately technical terms

Many of the above could be included under the general reading categories of

1. Skimming - searching for main ideas
2. Scanning - reading for information and specific details
3. SQ3Rs - (Survey, Question, Read, Reflect, Re-Read)

## READING IN THE CULTURAL DOMAIN

While most of the approaches to developing reading skills outlined already will be of significance in this domain there are dimensions to the reading of literature (and approaching the mass-media) which are distinct and need to be approached on their own terms.

### Aesthetic Reading

Louise Rosenblatt, who has been quoted already, describes the reading in this domain as "aesthetic reading". Aesthetic reading can be defined as a reading stance in which the reader is continually aware not alone of what is being said in the text, but also how it is being said and furthermore of his/her own personal imaginative, emotional and intellectual interaction with the text both during and after the reading. This reading stance involves a radical and complex refocusing of the person in contrast with the 'efferent' reading stance outlined earlier.

In attempting to develop the student's capacity for aesthetic reading then certain attitudes and a basic reorientation need to be cultivated. This would involve developing in the students an awareness of:

- language as an artistic medium: language as having sensuous, suggestive, symbolic dimensions which are central to literature.
- the need to be alert for word-patterns in diverse forms which may ignore, sustain or build on basic conventions to construct a greater intensity of meaning and experience.
- the different stances needed for approaching the various literary genre. If a student approaches a lyric poem with the same expectations as he/she approaches a novel then frustration is inevitable. (e.g. "There is no story"). This discrimination in approach is particularly important when approaching a play-text; frequently play-texts have been approached as novels with obvious detrimental results on the students understanding of how a play works in the context of language and the theatre.
- the need to re-encounter quality material so that the student can grow into the riches of the experience. There is really little place in this domain for "fast reading": there is no 'micro-wave approach' to the re-creation of a text. As Robert Frost remarked "our problem today is that we are too literal": students must be encouraged to escape from that prison of the literal and realise that literature says more than it appears to say. This does not imply reducing texts to hidden messages or morals but rather of empowering students to see perspectives in their reading that are not attainable at a first encounter.

- The recreative and interpretative nature of aesthetic reading: each person recreates a text in a unique way, as Hermann Hesse remarks "each person believes in a different part of the same story". This uniqueness of response needs to be facilitated as much as possible in class through group/pair work, journal keeping, and a wide range of interpretative activities. (cf. programme of activities for each year).

Teachers attempting to develop the above attitudes and skills will find that many of the techniques listed earlier are of benefit, Cloze procedures, Sequencing, Prediction can be used most creatively for all ability levels. Such procedures in the literary context involve the student in frequent re-readings of the text which have great potential. They can draw the pupil's attention to complex issues in word pattern, structure, form and style and thus create the awareness of complexity in the literary use of language.

#### Becoming an 'ear-reader'

Cultivating students' participation in the re-creation of literary texts is essential. Students need to be active in the literature class as much as possible, encouraged to read aloud in an interpretative manner on their own, in pairs or in groups. (This is not just reading around the class in a non-creative functional way to develop basic reading skills: such an approach is highly detrimental to developing aesthetic reading, reducing the potential of the encounter to a minimum). The reading aloud as suggested above should greatly help the students to cultivate an ear for language in literature. In literature, sound and rhythm are fundamental meaning makers; to read literature without some sense of these basic attributes is to deprive oneself of pleasure and meaning. The American poet and novelist, Robert Penn Warren says that "there are 'eye-readers' and 'ear-readers'; for literature it is essential to be an 'ear-reader'".

#### Memorisation

In relation to this topic as well the whole activity of memorisation arises. That students should engage in memorising verse is undeniably a worthwhile end. It internalises, makes a personal possession of forms, insights and words which can be recalled for savouring and contemplation at will: the act of memorising, as George Steiner emphasises "crowds the sensibility with the text in an intimate manner which enriches the person for life". The achievement of this wished for end has to be carefully managed, but an orientation towards participation, performance, presentation and re-reading, creates a context in which memorisation happens almost incidentally. Memorisation should not be the inevitable outcome of every poetic experience; rote-learning without an appreciative context of aesthetic pleasure or interpretative purpose, should not be imposed on students. Finally in this context, memorisation of verse is a skill that teachers may have to teach: it should not be taken for granted that students have the skill of memorising from nature.

## Questioning in Literature

In attempting to encourage students to move beyond the literal, certain questioning approaches may be found useful and liberating.

- Students could be asked to read (or re-read) a work and write out three questions (not literal) which the reading brought to their minds. The teacher could then collect these questions and use them subsequently in class as ways of approaching the work. The distinct advantage of this approach is that the teacher is beginning from where the students are relative to their understanding of the work, not where he/she thinks they are.
- Students could be asked to write down the words/phrases which they noticed most in their reading. Useful questions here are, What word/phrases surprised you? Are these related in any way? What word did you enjoy?
- Begin with sensuous-experiences created by the words. What kind of sounds and colours, rhythms are in this poem? Are there any contrasts in sound/colours/rhythms?
- The most difficult question to ask is the opening question after a reading of a poem, short story, or extract. If the reading has worked the atmosphere is tangible; to intrude into that with a literal minded question is to destroy it totally. Silence and a quiet student re-reading may be the most appropriate avenue of entry, followed by questions on feelings and images, or an invitation to write in their response journal.

CLASSROOM APPROACHES

TO

WRITING

Writing and Thinking

Writing and thinking are often understood to be two distinct activities. The traditional reproach from teachers to pupils, "Think before you write", exemplifies the dichotomy that was felt to exist between the two activities. Modern research has shown that writing and thinking are more accurately seen as interactive, and interdependent processes; the act of writing is best seen as a process of thinking, of analysing, exploring, ordering and synthesising experiences. E. M. Forster cogently summarised the intimate creative encounter that exists between words and thought when he remarked, "How do I know what I mean unless I see what I say" (or write). Writing is best seen then as a developing process of thought rather than as some ornament or dress of thought.

The implications of this viewpoint for the teaching of writing are substantial. Teacher's stance on pupils' writing, the preparation and development of writing, the modes of response to and evaluation of writing all need reconsideration.

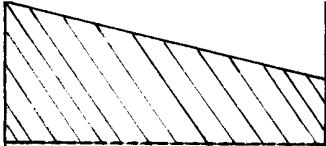
Writing and Audience

If writing is seen as a process of thought then all writing must be intentional and purposeful as though inevitably is. We cannot think for the sake of thinking nor can we write for the sake of writing. As with all the other language skills writing is only developed and improved in a personally meaningful context of experience. All writing should be a genuine act of communication to a specific audience which can range from self as audience to the Irish people as audience. Achieving successful written communication with others

is certainly dependent on developing competence in the basic skills of punctuation, spelling and paragraphing but also in knowing the appropriate language register to use for a given audience.

In a survey conducted in England some years ago (Nancy Martin: Learning to Write, 11-16) it was found that students wrote predominantly in a narrow range of language functions for predominantly one audience. In the following sketch diagram, the shaded area shows the range of school writing; students wrote in the functions of generalised narrative and classification for the audience of teacher as examiner.

RANGE OF WRITING CONTEXTS IN THE SECONDARY SCHOOL

Range of Language Functions Used		Range of Audience Addressed
Plays		Self
Stories		Friend
Poems		Peer
Descriptions		Class
Songs		School
Language Play		Outsider
Record		Abroad
Report		Teacher as Exaliner
Generalised Narrative		Parents
Classification		Public
Argument		
Speculation		
Theorising		
Persuasion		
Regulation		

If this is typical then it is not surprising that students lose interest in writing and language since there is little variety experienced or no interesting communicative challenge offered.

Dependent on the purpose context and audience of a piece of writing a teacher's stance must also vary. Traditionally teachers have tended to approach all writing in a similar manner looking for the correctness of Standard English. This may not always be the best initial stance to student's writing.

In seeking to develop the student's writing skills then care should be taken that he/she:

- (i) writes in all the domains of literacy,
- (ii) for a variety of purposes and audiences,
- (iii) and experiences appropriate response and evaluation from the teacher.

#### PERSONAL LITERACY

##### Initial Thinking

Writing in this domain should be employed always as a sorting-out process which may be an end in itself but also may be preparatory to writing in the other domains. Students should be invited and encouraged to think through writing by

- freely associating words around a particular topic (brainstorming),
- constructing diagrams and spidergrams,
- attempting provisional formulations
- generally playing with words and ideas in a particular context.

##### Response Journal

Allied to this is the activity of keeping a journal or diary in response to literary (or other) experiences: such a response journal should be an integral part of English teaching. Such work gradually develops in the student an awareness of his/her own unique affective and imaginative responses, and confers a validity and permanence on them. Furthermore it allows space for every student to respond which may not be always possible in the hurly-burly of classroom life. The journal helps the student (and the teacher) to see the development in his/her understanding of a text hopefully to a gradually deeper encounter with the work in question: it is a map of an individual's interactive dialogue with a text, a record of his/her constructions of meaning and interpretations. The journal may consist of lists of words, phrases, lines noted and liked; comment and reflections on words and expressions; drawings, diagrams, personal anecdotes linking the work to other personal experiences and relating the work to others by comparison and contrast and so on. A journal perhaps is best described as a kind of personal scrap-book in response to literary or media experiences.

## Teacher Response

In this area of personal literacy, where the emphasis is on the expressive use of language, it is important for the teacher to be particularly aware and sensitive in his/her approach to response. No one writes perfectly initially; to expect and demand the polish of standard English in this context is to interfere seriously with a necessary developmental process. This initial stage is exploratory and speculative, attempting to nurture a basic flow of ideas, feelings, images and words whereby the student can begin to relate to the experience being offered and gradually integrate it into his/her own meaning system.

While the 'basic skills' of spelling and punctuation are essential for proper communication, too early imposition of the demands they make can be counter-productive for the development of personal literacy. The process of thinking, feeling and imagining are untidy; we don't think and feel neatly in full stops, capitals, sentences and paragraphs. Thinking and feeling occur in rhythms of their own and initial writing in this domain will reflect those uncertain rhythms. To develop in students, the language skills and verbal range needed to disclose their internal experiences is a fundamental objective of this domain. To attempt to 'hustle' students through this experience, or to make it into something else is to short circuit the whole process of writing development and to endanger the possibility of writing becoming a meaningful liberating activity for the student.

This initial expressive use of language is the foundation for growth into the other areas of literacy. When confidence is established here then progress in the other domains can and will be much better. In the domain of social literacy the audiences and purposes become more challenging and correspondingly the demands for accuracy and expertise in 'basic skills' grows.

## SOCIAL LITERACY

### Basic Skills

While there has been much concern expressed about a serious decline in basic skills there is as yet no evidence to show that such a decline is actually taking place. Students are, it is true, less aware of the written word, they are less dependent upon it than previous generations for their entertainment and the visual image has taken over as the prime means of communication and entertainment. [In the not too distant future when word-processors with in-built spelling procedures become more available, other interesting issues will arise].

### Drill and Practice

In the past, basic skills tended to be taught in a 'drill' like fashion e.g. lists of spellings were learnt and tested regularly, punctuation was taught through practice; awareness of sentence structures and paragraphing happened rather than being systematically taught. As a total approach to basic skills, this methodology would appear to be not the wisest. This is not to say there is no place for the learning of spellings or exercises in punctuation but rather to assert more may be accomplished in other

In general terms the basic skills are learnt better when the student perceives a clear need and purpose for accuracy in the composition of text. The teacher can create frequent contexts in the area of social literacy for the student to realise that along with appropriateness, accuracy and correctness are essential for successful communication. Opportunities for teaching spellings and punctuation can be easily included in all the syllabus units planned for a class.

Thus in the domain of social literacy opportunities which motivate students strongly towards accuracy will be found in such contexts as:

- various kinds of formal letters, e.g. applications, invitations looking for information, comments to the press
- . report and essay writing intended for reading by other classes
- . newspaper articles and school magazines
- . advertising, posters and brochures
- filling out forms for various purposes

The discipline imposed here by an awareness of audience is generally very effective indeed.

While this contextualisation will certainly motivate students more powerfully than 'drills and practice', there is no doubt that with many students more elaborate strategies to build up their language accuracy and awareness will have to be used.

#### Individual problems: class teaching

There is no easy answer to teaching basic skills in a large class. Each child will have a different set of problems relative to the skills and needs to be dealt with individually if he/she is to overcome the difficulty. Nevertheless certain general strategies and approaches may be found useful.

#### Spelling:

- . students should always be encouraged to visualise a word first, sound it aloud, and then attempt to write it.
- use a 'game' approach regularly - frequent encounters with anagrams, crosswords, 'hangman', word squares, word-building are beneficial.
- . word-associations through prefixes, suffixes, roots, homophones and homograms - gives a sense of shape and pattern.
- . arising from the previous suggestion, words might be broken into syllables first and then gradually put together.

- *obviously the use of a suitable dictionary would be important. Students might be encouraged to keep a personal spelling-book where they recorded correctly, words they are continually misspelling: these words then could be deliberately learnt and examined by the teacher.*
- spelling rules may be useful in some cases - but generally they have little real effect in practice unless copiously and repeatedly illustrated with a wide array of word examples.
- obviously the use of computer programmes in this area would be useful.

fundamentally students should be expected to learn spellings rather than being taught them. This implies that they are involved with their own written work in the role of proof-reading. The teacher in the past perhaps devoted too much time to this work e.g. marking incorrect spellings and punctuation with little effect. Students before handing in any written work should be given ample time to re-read their work for this specific purpose. Peer reading may also be found useful. Students might mark in their work items they think are suspect for accuracy and then through consultation with peer, teacher, spelling book, dictionary, determine the correct spelling.

### Punctuation

As with spelling, class teaching in this area is of limited effectiveness: each student will have a different set of difficulties which need to be attended to on an individual basis. In large classes of mixed-ability this becomes an almost impossible task and failure for students to learn in class situations should not cause either surprise or frustration in the teacher. Basically it is best to do a little on a topic of punctuation (e.g. use of capitals, speech marks, full-stops) but to do it regularly.

Some useful strategies which might be employed are as follows

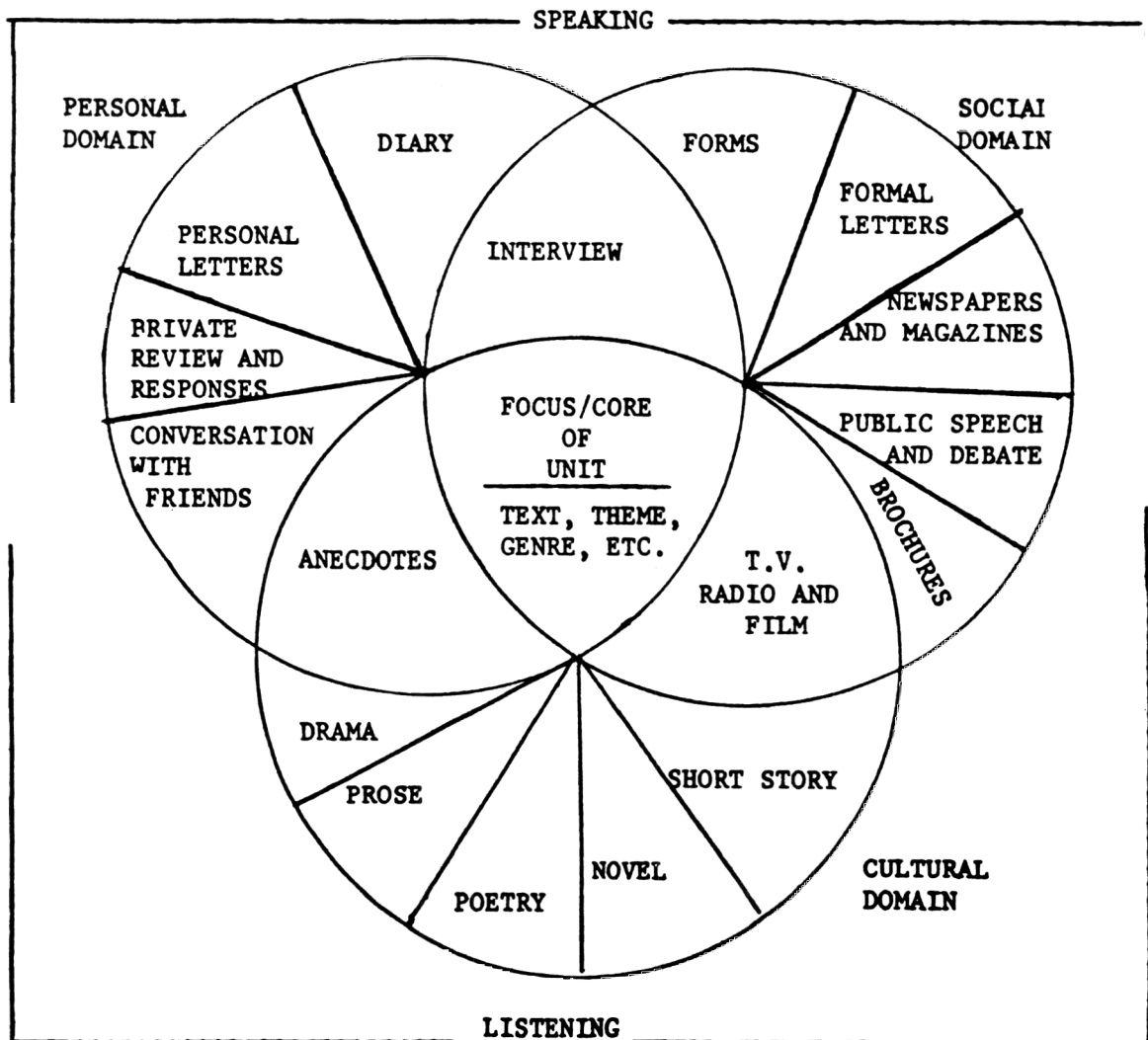
- punctuate the same sentence in a variety of ways
- rewrite a paragraph in different lengths of sentence
- listen to people reading or speaking, transcribe and extract correctly on to paper
- note how the punctuation in a text being read is organised
- listen to a text being read: punctuate as is thought desirable and compare with original punctuation in text.

### Paragraphing

Paragraphs are the essential building blocks of all written composition. Student awareness of paragraphing should be repeatedly fostered through reflecting on the layout of paragraphs in texts and through repeated assignments specifying the number of paragraphs required e.g.

1. Choose core-text(s), or cultural issue or language issue appropriate to pupils.
2. Decide on contexts or aspects of the core material which you think might be of interest to you and the pupils.
3. Relate to overall course design for class. Decide provisionally on objectives by selecting from the three domains of oracy and literacy. Opportunities may arise in the course of teaching the unit which may modify, extend and supplement these original objectives.
4. Choose possible supplementary material from available resources; range and diversity of material essential.
5. Plan provisional outline class sequence and the length of time or number of classes (approx.) you intend to spend on the Unit.
6. This procedure needs to be used with care and sensitivity by teachers and adapted to meet the specific needs of their pupils.

DIAGRAM OF INTERACTIVE STRUCTURE OF A SYLLABUS UNIT



- Write one paragraph on your opinion of .....
- . Write two paragraphs on the difference between .....
- Write three paragraphs on the stages of development of .....

As well students will need to be introduced to ways of constructing a paragraph. The teacher could illustrate this best by actually writing a paragraph on the black-board and thus exhibiting the process of paragraph making.

The students should be introduced to the basic notion that each paragraph has

- (i) a specific well defined key-sentence
- (ii) a section wherein this key-sentence is elaborated and developed in a variety of ways e.g. by illustrations, anecdotes, examples, descriptions, lists, reasons and analysis.

In first year work particularly the emphasis should be strongly on developing the paragraph concept and in written composition, quality, perhaps should be aimed at rather than quantity.

#### Handwriting

Particular attention may need to be paid to this dying art. A good, legible hand is a great advantage for any student particularly when the work is frequently presented to others for their response. Communication of excellent content is regularly frustrated not by problems with punctuation and spelling but by illegible hand writing. Motivating students in this context may again be achieved by introducing audience awareness into as many writing tasks as possible. A useful link with the art-teacher could be established here in the area of calligraphy and in the creation and production of posters, brochures, word cards, captions and titles.

In the domain of social literacy the basic skills and their accurate use in conventional terms assume major importance. Teachers in responding to exercises in the social domain will therefore obviously be keen to cultivate the necessary skill and expertise in these areas. But proficiency in these skills is not achieved early or quickly. Pupil involvement in their use, for clearly defined ends and arising from felt needs, will achieve the objectives eventually.

#### CULTURAL LITERACY

Writing in this area offers a difficult challenge to students. Here sophisticated skills are necessary (along with the basic skills) for achieving worthwhile growth in language. This domain is the particular cherished area of English teachers, an area singularly belonging to the subject English. It is concerned with using English as an artistic medium; encouraging students to write in literary forms and create experience through words used accurately in complex patterns to generate rich perspectives of experience for both writer and reader.

Since the 60's when creative writing became central in English teaching, the term has gradually come to denote, at best an essay option or at worst an excuse for the student to indulge in undisciplined, and illiterate writing.

Creative writing approached properly is one of the most challenging (if none the less enjoyable) tasks a teacher would give to a student. It entails an awareness of words and language structures much above that demanded in any other domain. In creative writing words are being used at their most intense to create an experience for the reader, not be tell about experience or to indulge in therapeutic overflow. Creative writing is dependent on careful preparatory work, awareness of form and constant revision and reworking so that desired ends are being achieved.

Students no matter what their ability should be invited to write Creatively in a range of literary forms chosen to suit their ability and experience.

- Prose Narrative is obviously the most fundamental form to be offered - narratives based on auto-biographical events, imagined events, local historical events are all possible.
- Drama Scripts in various forms and for various media.
- Poems ranging from the simple colour poems to the Sonnet

## WRITING IN RESPONSE TO LITERARY EXPERIENCES

### Interventions

This syllabus strongly advocates a form of creative/critical writing called 'interventions'. Interventions involve the student in a sophisticated form of literary play which attempts to enter more fully into the imaginative world of a text by exploring alternative possibilities in character, scene, setting, etc.

Since every text (aural, written, or visual) is a selection of words, images, characters, scenes and viewpoints, it is possible to imagine that an author could have made alternative choices in any of these areas, e.g., omitted scenes, added a character, changed a viewpoint, given a different beginning or ending. Furthermore in every text there are 'gaps' which invite the imagination of the reader to fill them with speculations and explanations. Roland Barthes has commented that the most erotic aspect of a garment is where it gapes; so, he continued, where the textual garment gapes the strongest invitation is offered to the reader to explore and discover. These two areas then of 'possible alternatives' and 'textual gaps' are the ideal stimuli for motivating students to write creative interventions.

Before any such writing is attempted it would be of fundamental importance that the students are familiar with the atmosphere, characters and general quality of the text's imaginative world. It is only from such intimacy that aesthetically valid interventions can be created. An intervention which generally contradicts the general tenor of a text or totally belies a character would be of suspect value. Thus it would seem unlikely based on textual evidence that the Nurse in Romeo and Juliet could be presented in an intervention as a puritanical spinster or that Falstaff could seriously be presented as being anti-alcoholic drink! The patterns of the primary text will clearly suggest certain parameters and within those the interventions can freely be created.

There may be a risk that this kind of writing may displace the student's meliority of the primary text. This can very simply be offset by a re-reading of the primary text if it is thought necessary.

Objections to this approach may arise from those who view primary texts as making definitive statements. No text of merit has such in-built finality. Literature questions, reveals and makes available experiences, it does not give simplistic one-dimensional answers. A text for each reader is "a spectrum of possibilities": the intervention approach invites the reader to explore these possibilities. This entails close reading, the testing of hypotheses and interpretations and the refinement and deepening of personal response at all levels, affective, imaginative and critical.

While a number of examples of this approach have been suggested earlier in the context of oral and aural skills the following approaches to a poem (Charles Causley's poem, What has happened to Lulu?) will help to underline the approach.

WHAT HAS HAPPENED TO LULU?

What has happened to Lulu, mother?  
What has happened to Lulu?  
There's nothing in her bed an old rag-doll  
And by its side a shoe.

Why is her window wide, mother,  
The curtain flapping free,  
And only a circle on the dusty shelf  
Where her money-box used to be?

Why do you turn your head, mother,  
And why do the tear-drops fall?  
And why do you crumple that note on the fire  
And say it is nothing at all?

I woke to voices late last night,  
I heard an engine roar.  
Why do you tell me that things I heard  
Were a dream and nothing more?

I heard somebody cry, mother,  
In anger or in pain,  
But now I ask you why, mother,  
You say it was a gust of rain.

Why do you wander about as though  
You don't know what to do?  
What has happened to Lulu, mother,  
What has happened to Lu?

(from Golden Apples (p.8): Piper Books)

Possible Interventions

- (i) Write Lulu's farewell note.
- (ii) Speculate on the "voices". Who was speaking? What was being said?
- (iii) Who is the speaker of the poem? Describe and outline the relationship you imagine existed between Lulu and the speaker in an imagined dialogue between them in the past.
- (iv) What kind of setting does the poem suggest?
- (vi) Describe Lulu from differing viewpoints e.g. Father's, Mother's, Brother's/Sister's, any others.
- (vii) Write another verse for the poem maintaining its style, tone and rhythm.

## Critical Writing

The writing of critical commentaries should have a significant place in the writing of those students who are capable of encountering the challenge this discipline offers. English teachers are well aware of the methodology for teaching this form of writing so the minimum will be said here. In summary the teaching of critical writing should seek to help students to:

- take notes while re-reading for a critical purpose.
- select appropriate references to justify individual responses and interpretations.
- analyse artistic patterns and explain how they achieve particular effects.
- trace the development of themes and characters.
- use necessary terminology for discussing literary texts.
- inter-relate, compare and contrast texts.
- plan, write, revise critical essays on given topics.

To contrast the critical approach with the intervention approach typical critical questions on the poem "What has happened to Lulu?" might be as follows:

- (i) What range of feelings are present in the poem?
- (ii) What details in the poem generate the feelings?
- (iii) Why is the poem in the format of questions?
- (iv) Why is a child's viewpoint used?
- (v) How does the Simplicity of the language contribute to the poem's overall effects?
- (vi) Why does the poem have such a dramatic impact?

## CLASSROOM APPROACHES TO DRAMA

(An Introductory Note)

Since student-participation and activity-learning are seen as central to this syllabus it is obvious that drama as a methodological approach should pervade the English classroom. This does not mean that all English teachers must immediately transform themselves into theatrical producers. It does suggest however that drama approaches should and can be employed successfully by all teachers no matter how limited their experience may be in this area.

Drama in education, is essentially concerned with engaging students in the process of "living out imagined experience" whatever its source or context rather than in producing performances for an audience. Drama is initially concerned with developing the students confidence and self-awareness by encouraging participation in classroom drama in diverse forms.

Irrespective of the form and context the prime objective of most dramatic activity will be for the student to experience "on pulses and palms" a "doing of life".

Areas of dramatic activity may be briefly summarised as follows:

i. Oral and aural skills

- Anecdote
- Story-teaching
- Dialogue
- Interview
- Public Speech
- Giving instructions, directions and commands
- Tape-recording

2. Methodological Approach to Literature

- Dramatic Reading
- Role-Play
- Mime/tableau
- Verse-speaking: Choral Verse: Group presentation
- Scene-writing
- Script-writing
- Improvisation with character

3. Play-Texts

- How to read a play-text
- Awareness of language-use in texts
- The significance of stage-directions

4. Theatre/Stage Image

- A sense of space and shape
- Visualisation of scene
- Stage-Image
- Sets, Costumes
- Colours/Symbols

## 5. Critical Discussion - Terminology of Drama

- Character
- Climax
- Point of View
- Tension
- Resolution
- Tone
- Mood
- Hero/Villain

Elaborate resources are not needed for introducing drama approaches. Teachers can begin by integrating some drama in the students encounter with a wide range of texts. Students could start by reading interpretatively a part of a text in pairs or small groups: these could then be developed quite easily into an improvisation of an imagined dialogue between characters in the text. Obviously as student confidence grows more challenging tasks could be given; the reading of drama-texts and the creation of more elaborate improvisations leading to script-writing and eventual performance would be a reasonable direction for growth.

### ILLUSTRATION OF DRAMA-APPROACHES

#### i. Drama in Education Class on the poem 'Timothy Winters'

##### Introduction

This class uses an easy and accessible poem as the stimulus for imaginative exploration both of poem and of the issues dealt with in that poem. It utilises a series of drama-in-education techniques including teacher-in-role but at no time is the need to play a role too heavy or too isolated for teacher or pupils. The structure of the class moves the pupils from energetic creation of characters in the 'families of Timothy's neighbours' which frequently produces, unthinkingly, very prejudiced attitudes to the quiet reflection of the final moments where they engage with Timothy's responses. The necessary neutrality of the teacher-in-role as the social worker will produce a range of social attitudes which will provide a fruitful background to the class.

##### Properties

Copies of 'Timothy Winters', a photograph of Timothy's street and copies of the report.

If one is available, the use of a real camera will greatly help in the creation of the 'photograph'.

##### Whole Group•. Teacher in Role

The teacher addresses the class as Mr/Ms Mahony from the Department of Social Welfare. 'Good morning. I'd like to tell you about one of my cases, one that's causing me a great deal of worry. His name is Timothy Winters and this is what I've been told about him:

Timothy Winters

Timothy Winters comes to school  
With eyes as wide as a football pool,  
Ears like bombs and teeth like splinters:  
A blitz of a boy is Timothy Winters.

His belly is white, his neck is dark,  
And his hair is an exclamation mark.  
His clothes are enough to scare a crow  
And through his britches the blue wind blow.

When teacher talks he won't hear a word  
And he shoots down dead the arithmetic-bird,  
He licks the patterns off his plate  
And he's not even heard of the Welfare State.

Timothy Winters has bloody feet  
And he lives in a house in Suez Street,  
He sleeps in a sack on the Kitchen floor  
Any they say there aren't boys like him anymore.

Old man Winters likes his beer  
And his missus ran off with a bombardier,  
Grandma sits in the grate with a grin  
And Timothy's dosed with an aspirin.

The Welfare Worker lies awake  
But the law's as tricky as a ten-foot snake,  
So Timothy Winters drinks his cup  
And slowly goes on growing up.

At Morning Prayers the Headmaster helves  
For children less fortunate than ourselves,  
And the loudest response in the room is when  
Timothy Winters roars 'Amen'!

So come one angel, come on ten:  
Timothy Winters says 'Amen'  
Amen amen amen amen.  
Timothy Winters, Lord.

Amen.

Charles Causley

Small Groups

The teacher continues. 'I have a picture of the street where Timothy lives in number 5 and I know you live there too. I've tried calling to Timothy's house but there never seems to be anybody there. Hello, you must be the Murphys. What number do you live Mr. Murphy? Please introduce me to your family?'

The class is broken up into groups of 4-6, each group becoming a family with children, grandparents, etc. The 'families' live more or less close to Timothy and as they are questioned by the teacher-in-role they reveal the life that Timothy lives and society's varying attitudes to him. The knowledge that the person from the Department has the power to remove Timothy from his surroundings hang over the discussion and some 'families' are reluctant to give details of all they know to such a person.

#### The Groups

The teacher asks all the children of the street to come together for a photograph. He/she places a chair where Timothy will sit when he can be found. The 'children' are asked to pose themselves near to or away from Timothy depending on whether they like him or not. Advice or comments from the 'parents and relatives' are encouraged.

#### Report Writing

Each person or group is asked to fill in a report on Timothy. All information has to be gathered so that the Department can decide what to do about the situation. A consensus of the recommendations of people in Timothy's neighbourhood is essential in making the ultimate decision as to whether or not to remove him to a children's home.

#### Empty Chair

The teacher then asks the class to become basically three groups and to be the voices of Timothy, the neighbours and Mr/Mrs Mahony. This can be done very quietly as the teacher places the 'Timothy' chair in the centre of the space and begins to talk very smoothly: 'But that night Timothy lay awake for a long time and the voices kept going through his head. He could hear Mr/Mrs Mahony saying ..... (turning to the group who represent the social worker and taking a line from there) ... but Timothy thought differently ... (turning to the Timothy group), etc. the teacher effectively channels a discussion 'through' Timothy without Timothy ever appearing.

#### Conclusion

The class during the course of this will have examined not only the details of the poem but also, imaginatively, the social background which produced Timothy and the complex attitudes which people have towards the immediate and concrete problem of what to do about him.



SECTION C

**Syllabus Units**

## SAMPLE UNITS

### General Approaches to Sample Units

- (i) The following units are simply illustrative of the approach recommended by the syllabus. All these units, whether detailed or in outline, will need to be adapted by individual teachers to suit their own particular situation. Teacher interest, availability of resources and student ability will obviously be major factors determining changes.
- (ii) If teachers find these units unsatisfactory then they should design their own Units in co-operation with colleagues.
- (iii) In text based units it is of fundamental importance that a priority position is given in the classroom to an initial enjoyable encounter with the chosen text. Although language assignments can be provisionally planned by the teacher they should arise naturally out of the imaginative and recreative experience of the text. Language assignments should not be arbitrarily imposed as texts.
- (iv) Theme based units should be approached in such a manner that does not severely reduce the potential and fullness of texts to serve the needs of the unit.
- (v) In all units literacy and oracy skills should be effectively integrated as the teacher realises the needs and standards of the students in these areas.

**NOTE: The National Council for Curriculum and Assessment has identified the specific need to ensure that routes through the syllabus be devised for weak or remedial students.. Some sample units, focusing on language development will be developed in this context. In particular, it must be stressed that the current syllabus can easily encompass remedial courses designed to meet the needs of twelve to fifteen year olds with language difficulties.**

LIST OF SAMPLE UNITS

Sample Unit	1.	Heroes and Heroines
	2	Fiction: 'The Midnight Fox'
	3	Fiction: 'Walkabout'
	4	Fiction: 'The Cay'
	5	Prose (Autobiography): 'Twopence to Cross the Mersey'
	6	People and Relationships
	7	Fiction: 'The Iron Man'
	8	Short Stories: Animals in Literatur~
	9	Poetry: Narrative Verse
	i0	Fiction: 'Huckleberry Finn'
	ii	Drama
	12	Drama: 'The Merchant of Venice'
	13	Drama: 'Henry IV'
	14	Mass Media: general
	15	Mass Media: advertising

SAMPLE UNIT 1 - A Thematic Unit

A. HEROES AND HEROINES

i. First Year.

2. Contexts of Interest

(a) Pop Stars and Sport Heroes/Heroines

(b) Dreams of Fame and Fortune

(c) Rebels, Patriots, Explorers, Handicapped Persons

(d) Heroes/Heroines in Literature

3. Provisional Objectives

(a) Personal Literacy and Oracy:

Speaking and Listening: Group/Class Discussion,  
Interviewing

Writing: Personal Letter

(b) Social Literacy and Oracy:

Reading: Newspapers and Magazines

Writing: Headlines, Captions and Record  
Blurbs

(c) Cultural Literacy: Respond to short-stories, poems and  
novels in a variety of ways e.g.  
compose scenes, interpret orally,  
listen to readings: read novel.

4. Resources

Choose from the following as appropriate to students' abilities  
and interests.

(i) Pictures of Pop Stars and Sports Stars

(ii) Newspapers, magazines, record sleeves

(iii) Short Stories: Walter Mitty: The Trout

(iv) Novels: The Boy Who was Afraid - A. Sperry; The  
Eighteenth Emergency - B. Byars; Walkabout - J.V.  
Marshall

(v) Verse and Story: The Highwayman: The Ballad of Athlone;  
Horatius on the Bridge (Extract); Songs of the Sourdough;  
et al.

OUTLINE OF CLASS ACTIVITY: Heroes and Heroines

Context	Response and Activity
<p>i. Pictures and Photographs (Video)?</p>	<p>Oral:</p> <p>Group/pair discussion on aspects of material viewed e.g. the glamour and money.</p> <p>Written:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>(i) Description of favourite Star</li><li>(ii) List of questions to ask this Star (punctuation opp.)</li><li>(iii) A series of captions, titles and headlines about Star (simple sentence structures)</li></ul>
<p>2. Magazines/Newspapers:</p> <p>Items on outlook and behaviour of stars. Students could bring in their own chain of materials and read to group.</p>	<p>Oral:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>(i) Comment on works and topics of article. Consider view-point and attitudes revealed.</li><li>(ii) Improvise conversation with Star on content of article; role-play of reporter interviewing Star.</li></ul> <p>Written:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>(i) Some short paragraph(s) about star in 'journalese' style.</li><li>(ii) Fan-letter to chosen Star.</li></ul>
<p>3. Read The Secret Life of Walter Mitty</p>	<p>Oral:</p> <p>Full discussion of the experience of the story:</p> <p>Highlight the contrast between dream and reality achieved by changes in style of sentence, vocabulary and dialogue.</p> <p>Written:</p> <p>Compose another dream episode for Mitty using the contrasting style of the story. Write a story on 'Dreams of fame I have'.</p>

4. Rebels, Portraits, (et.al) Oral:
- Reading: Select from Diary of Anne Frank; Under the Eye of the Clock, etc. Give accounts of this type of 'heroic' behaviour. Personal Anecdotes and/or research in available resources etc.
- Written:
- Emphasis: Courage, Commitment, Loneliness, suffering, triumph. Describe specific hero/heroine! Make small posters.
5. View Video/Film and/or Read Novel Oral:
- Select from e.g. Discuss development of hero/heroine in text. Consider: relationships, challenges, decisions, out-look, range of feelings.
1. Walkabout J.V. Marshall
  2. The Boy Who Was Afraid - A. Sperry
  3. The Eighteenth Emergency . B. Byars
- Written:
- Or: Listen to Audio-Cassette of appropriate novel. 1. Comment on aspects of text of interest to class.
- Read: The Trout, S. O'Faolain 2. Each student keeps journal/diary of response while encountering text.
- Oral:
- Discuss personal challenges: moving from fantasy to reality, from refusal to responsibility. Improvise dialogue based on imagined scene between characters.
- Written:
- Compose (autobiographical) narrative to show a specific personal challenge or decision.
6. Verse/Song Oral:
- Select from: Take pleasure in the sound, rhythm and adventure of the verse.
- The Highwayman; Present dramatic readings and oral interpretations.
- Contemporary Ballads
- Written:
- Present scene from poem in play-script form. Compose short verse in style of poem. Do not mention the words hero/heroine - see what happens in their own responses.

SAMPLE UNIT 2 - A Fiction Unit

**The midnight Fox - Betsy Byars**

Resources

1. Copy of novel for each student.
2. Selection of poems, short stories, media material.
3. File/copybook for each student - to make a portfolio of work focussed on the novel.

General Objectives (taken from First Year programme of concepts and activities)

1. Oral/Aural: tell anecdote~ engage in discussion; ask questions; present poems.
2. Reading: read silently for a range of literal and appreciative purposes; read aloud interpretatively; read stories and poems for pleasure; approach media material to focus on word choice.
3. Writing: write narrative with beginning, middle, end shape; compose nonsense poems, engage in word play; plan and present poster; write letter to outside audience.
4. Basic Skills: Capitals, Fullstops, paragraph making, spellings and vocabulary as they arise.
5. Literary concepts: character development, hero, story shape.

Pre-Reading Activities

- APPROACHES: Discuss cover picture  
Speculate on title  
Read opening paragraphs: prediction

Reading the Novel:

Strategies for developing student engagement:

1. Teacher reads regularly - humour, tone, emotional range
2. Students do group reading for interpretative purpose
3. Silent reading for particular end, e.g. facts, opinion, response - class and group discussion on character and action.
4. Students write regularly in response journal free or directed - written interventions in text, fill in gaps, change viewpoint.
5. Language awareness procedures as is thought desirable - cloze, prediction, sequencing, summary.

Post-Reading

6. Divide novel into episodes for T.V. series; give title to each.
7. Describe a picture you would compose for this novel - reconsider the cover picture.
8. Compose epilogues: what happened to Tom, the fox and cub, Petie.

SAMPLE UNIT - 'The Midnight Fox' - extended activities

I. RE-READINGS/AESTHETIC AND IMAGINATIVE CONTEXTS

Tom and Animals

(a) Re-read and discuss

- |       |                        |             |
|-------|------------------------|-------------|
| (i)   | Tom's initial attitude | (Beginning) |
| (ii)  | The changes -          | (Middle)    |
| (iii) | The Aftermath -        | (End)       |

(b) Related Readings (Select)

- (i) The Wren's Nest
- (ii) The Kitten

Assignments

Compose suitable  
Headlines/Captions  
for each story:

Contrast the experience of  
these stories with the novel:

Write paragraph to  
develop headline

- (i) main character
- (ii) attitude to animals
- (iii) effect of ending

Oral/Written:  
Imagine characters  
from the different  
stories meeting -  
suggest what would  
happen.

i. Tell anecdote  
about animal  
encounter.

2. Compose story and  
animal theme:  
viewpoint:  
beginning/middle/  
end: 3-6  
paragraphs.  
After final draft  
insert into file.

SAMPLE UNIT - 'The Midnight Fox' - extended activities

2. HUMOUR AND FANTASY

Assignments

- (a) Discuss the funny aspects of the novel:  
list the type of funny items e.g.
- Tom's fantasies  
Petie's headlines  
Parodies of TV
- (b) Related Readings (select)  
Walter Mitty (extracts)  
First Confession
- (c) Nonsense Verse/Parodies  
Riddles.
- Poem: Warm Babies
- i. Each student prefers a reading of a particular incident.
2. Compose another fantasy in the form of an entry to Tom's diary (Chpts. i, 7, i0)
- Compose riddle/parody. Indulge in word-play. Prepare choral reading of Warm Babies.

SAMPLE UNIT - 'The Midnight Fox' - extended activities

3. MASS MEDIA

Assignment

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| <p>(a) (i) Choose an advert, from the media.</p> <p>(ii) Show how it could be wrongly interpreted.</p>            | <p>Invent a comic version of the advert.</p> <p>Write letter to proprietary brand requesting explanation.</p> |
| <p>(b) Two TV Games mentioned in the novel:<br/>p.16 "You have a secret".<br/>p.71 "This is your bad moment".</p> | <p>Improvise role-play in either of these game-contexts.<br/>Write up dialogue (P).</p>                       |
| <p>(c) Look at Petie's questionnaire - discuss does it actually make sense. Answer the questions.</p>             | <p>Devise similiar questionnaire on chosen topic. Apply to people and report back to class (P).</p>           |

SAMPLE UNIT - 'The Midnight Fox' - extended activities

4. LANGUAGE AWARENESS

(a) Re-read Tom's description of the fox.  
Discuss how he created his feelings;

- (i) adjectives
- (ii) headlines (Fox)
- (iii) comparisons

Assignments

(b) Related readings: poetry/select

Four ducks on a pond  
Tyger, Tyger  
The Tom Cat  
The Eagle

Describe something  
you find 'awesome':  
Verse/Prose.

Optional Private Reading

The Eighteenth Emergency	-	B. Byars
Run Wild, Run Free	-	T. McCaughren
Bless the Beasts and the Children	-	G. Swarthout
The Incredible Journey	-	S. Burnford
The Red Pony	-	J. Steinbeck

SAMPLE UNIT 3 - A Fiction Unit

**Walkabout - J. V. Marshall**

Resources

1. Copy of novel for each student.
2. Selection of poems, short stories, media material.
3. File/copybook for each student - to make a portfolio of work focussed on the novel.

General Objectives (taken from First Year programme of concepts and activities).

- i. Oral/Aural: tell anecdote; engage in discussion; ask questions; present poems.
2. Reading: read silently for a range of literal and appreciative purposes; read aloud interpretatively; read stories and poems for pleasure; approach media material to focus on word choice.
3. Writing: write narrative with beginning, middle, end shape; compose nonsense poems, engage in word play; plan and present poster; write letter to outside audience.
4. Basic Skills: capitals, fullstops, paragraph making, spellings and vocabulary as they arise, speech marks, forms of composition and story.
5. Literary Concepts: story-shape, viewpoint relationships, character change, sound and texture of words.

Pre-reading

1. Tell stories from the exploration of Australia (Burke and Wills).
2. Discuss the Aborigines (the word) - beliefs, practices, attitudes.
3. Display paintings, photos - select impressions.
4. Draw map of Australia - mark in deserts - create a sense of size and space.

Reading

1. Teacher reads - description and settings.
2. Student participation - dialogues/choral.
3. Silent reading - facts, outlook, viewpoint, attitudes, responses.

4. Students write regularly in response journals; free or directed; comments, images, feelings, ideas, words.
5. Interventions in the text: add scene, fill in background, change viewpoint, speculate on alternatives.
6. Language awareness exercises on quality of style, etc.

#### Post-Reading

- i. Write a eulogy for the aborigine - give him a name appropriate to his actions.
2. Write epilogues - in a variety of forms, e.g.
  - (i) Mary back in Charleston - diary, newspaper, report, public speech.
  - (ii) Peter - parents view on him - the changes.
- Imagine filming the three most important scenes of the book. Make out a series of 'shots' you would take to create the feeling and the mood of these scenes.

#### Re-Readings - 'Walkabout'

- i. Prejudice and Cultural Values
  - (i) Outline in a list the two cultures in the book - survey series of attitudes.
  - (ii) Where do the conflicts arise? Itemise the scenes.
  - (iii) Is anyone to blame for the outcome of the book?
 

Group discussion.  
Report back to class and improvise/role-play.  
Interview with Peter and Mary.
  - (iv) Stereotypes: relate to prejudice. How are people stereotyped? List controls.
 

Make out specific stereotype: Present to class, discuss.

#### Related Readings

- (i) My parents kept me from children who were rough.
 

Write story based on prejudice/ stereotype: contrast scenes told from different viewpoints.
- (ii) Extracts from:
 

Huck Finn  
The Summer of My German Soldier  
Roll Of Thunder, Hear My Cry
- (iii) Media material

2. *Landscapes of Australia - The Natural World*

Individual/pairs project work

Aim: a brochure/poster/folder of chosen animal/objects/  
place. Have exhibition for other class.

Approaches: Co-operate with History/Geography/Art (?)

Write to various agencies for material

Invite Australian to talk to class

Film/Video - Australian world

3. Sounds and Texture of Words: [Syllables - Spelling]

Make dictionary/glossary of aborigine words in novel

Add other words, now a part of English e.g. Boomerang;  
didgeridoo.

(iii) Discuss the 'kind' of words they are.

(iv) Make a list of your favourite words - (sound and texture  
mostly).

Related Readings

Mushrooms Sylvia Plath

'Ough' W. T. Goodge

Assignment Compose a poem of your own favour words

e.g. Haberdashery  
Ooze and frippery  
Elongate and hippo too  
Pom-pom, do-do  
Blight and sojourn  
Are words I like to listen to

4. Myths, Legends/Lore

(a) Frequent reference throughout the novel

"The-rock-that-fell-out-of-the-moon"

Only Man has Fire

(iii) Avalon, Vadhalla, The Isle of the Blest

Dreamtime - the Spirits

Significance of place names in all landscapes Irish]

(b) Supplementary Reading:

A selection of myths/legends

(c) Assignments:

- (i) Tell legend to the class/groups
- (ii) Compose narrative in legend/myth based on some of the events in the book
- (iii) The aborigine was not buried according to the ritual of his people: base a legend/ghost story about this involving the three characters.

Private Optional Reading

Across the Barricades, Joan Lingard  
The Great Gilly Hopkins, K. Paterson  
The Cay, Theodore Taylor  
The Machine Gunners, Robert Westall

SAMPLE UNIT 4 - A Fiction Unit

THE CAY BY T. TAYLOR

FIRST YEAR

Aesthetic and Imaginative Contexts	Possible Language Assignments	Supplementary Material
Philip's isolation exiled from home: feeling lost and threatened	Oral/written present story, journal of personal experience of insecurity and threat	First Confession - F. O'Connor; Janey Mary - J. Plunkett; Not Waving But Drowning - S. Smith
Sea disasters; sea mysteries	Report of Philip's captain, re sinking; interview other survivors	Accounts of famous sea disasters e.g. Titanic, Lusitania. Extract from Ancient Mariner, S.T.C.
Island setting and landscape	Letters to travel agents for brochures; descriptive essay: My Island	Sea Scape - W.H. Auden; The Lobster Season - M. O'Sullivan
Development of relationship between Tim and Phil; significant moments in novel	Compose another incident to show Tim's understanding and Phil's prejudice	Hunchback in the Park - D. Thomas; read extracts from Roll of Thunder, Hear My Cry - M. Taylor; or/and Across The Barricades - J. Lingard
Phil's blindness; sound and shapes; texture of words and things	Describe object or experience only in terms of sound, shape and texture - class to identify	Mime and drama on theme of blindness. Read extract from Treasure Island on the blindman, Pugh
Character of Tim	Write obituary of Tim. Imagine previous life and write biographical sketch	Read obituary notices.
Phil's return to parents and home	Write conversation between parents about changes in Phil	

For optional private reading:

1. TREASURE ISLAND - R.L. Stevenson
2. MOONFLEET - J. Meade F.
3. THE OLD MAN AND THE SEA - E. Hemingway
4. ACROSS THE BARRICADES - J. Lingard

## SAMPLE UNIT 5 - A Prose Unit

## TWO PENCE TO CROSS THE MERSEY BY HELEN FORRESTER

Ordinary and Higher Level First Year

Asterisked section may be considered too difficult for Ordinary level.

Preparation: Collect information/pictures on Victorian houses/slums/The Depression.

<u>Aesthetic and Imaginative Contexts</u>	<u>Possible Language Assignments</u>	<u>Supplementary Material</u>
Childhood Memories	Collect oral anecdotes of personal memories - emphasis on remembered feelings e.g. fear, guilt, excitement, etc. Write an autobiographical incident. Dialogue between any two characters.	Extracts from: (1) <u>Friedrich</u> by Han Peter Richter (N) (2) <u>A Strong and Willing Girl</u> by Dorothy Edwards (N)  <u>A Christmas Childhood</u> by Patrick Kavanagh (P) <u>Mid-Term Break</u> by S. Heaney (P)
Poverty - struggle for survival/unemployment/humiliation	Interview with a Vincent de Paul worker or social worker. Write-up report on same. Collect newspaper articles on poverty, unemployment, etc.  Write Helen's letter to her best friend explaining how she feels. Filling in forms - application for unemployment benefit. Illustrations of incidents/places, etc. in the novel.	<u>Janey Mary</u> (S.S.) Excerpts from: (1) <u>The Charwoman's Daughter</u> by J. Stephens (N) (2) <u>Timothy Winters</u> by C. Causley (P)
Charity - availability of; forms of; etc.	Write letters to charitable organisations requesting information re extent of poverty, help provided, etc. Debate: That the Irish people do not do enough for the poor. Oral presentation of facts to class. Essay: What I would do for the poor if I were Taoiseach. Write a poem: "My little world was swept away".	Excerpts from: <u>A Christmas Carol</u> by Charles Dickens (N)

Aesthetic and Imaginative Contexts	Possible Language Assignments	Supplementary Material
Good character creation and development	Write a description of Helen including appearance and personality (and other characters)	Short character descriptions from: i. James & The Giant Peach, Roald Dahl (N); 2. George's Marvellous Medicine, Roald Dahl (N); 3. Home Before Night, Hugh Leonard; 4. Cider with Rosie Laurie Lee
Creation of atmosphere in descriptive passages	Write a description of a Victorian household - appearance, servants, status, etc. e.g. "Upstairs, Downstairs"	Excerpts from: i. Upstairs Downstairs 2. A Victorian Household, Eil~s Dillon
Responsibilities - Parents to Children; Children to Parents	Class divided - one half write a section of the Mother's diary, the other half write Helen's diary. Read aloud - Discussion (This is an effort: to show that adults - Parents/Teachers - are human too). Dramatization of any incident involving Helen and her mother.	The Shy Fathers - Lynd, The Poteen Maker (S.S.) Michael McLaverty  *Up the Bare Stairs (S.S.) Excerpts from: The Diary of Anne Frank
Children's cruelty to one another	Oral collection of personal examples of same. Panel discussion on topic: Reasons for: examples of: Solution to: etc. Write "If I were Helen, I would..."	My Parents Kept Me From Children Who Were Rough, Stephen Spender (P); Weep for Our Pride (S.S.) James Plunkett. Excerpt from The Didekoy Rumer Goden (N). Hide and Seek by Vernon Scannell (P)
<b>Neighbours</b>	Watch video of one episode of "Neighbours" Oral - the part played by neighbours in this episode	The Confirmation Suit by Brendan Behan (S.S.); Excerpt from: The Charwoman's Daughter by J. Stephens

Follow-up: Helen is interviewed for television. Write, then Dramatize.

In the case of some themes, there may seem to be too many "assignments" listed. Only as many as the teacher considers suitable should be tackled.

For Optional Private Reading by Pupils During This Unit

A Strong and Willing Girl by Dorothy Edwards.

I Was There Friedrich by Hans Peter Richter.

Dan Alone by Frances Hodgson Burnett.

The Didekoy by Rumer Godden.

\*The Circle Unbroken by Mildred D. Taylor (Plus).

\*Roll of Thunder, Hear My Cry by Mildred D. Taylor.

The Summer of My German Soldier by Bette Greene.

(Devised by Ms. Colette Dunne, Assumption Secondary School, Walkinstown, Dublin).

N-Novel; P-Poem; SS-Short Story

SAMPLE UNIT 6 - A Thematic Unit

PEOPLE AND RELATIONSHIPS

	PERSONAL LITERACY	SOCIAL LITERACY	CULTURAL LITERACY
[Characters Parents and children Characters in novels/stories Relationships in novels/ stories]	Discussion Interview Personal letter Improvised drama	Read newspaper article Write interview questions for magazine Letter to newspaper	Response to texts Readings Read novel, poetry, stories and/or watch film Write character descriptions Write short story or poem

Resources:

Pictures

Newspaper article

Short Stories - My Oedipus Complex, Frank O'Connor

Novels: - Walkabout - James Vance Marshall; The Red Pony - John Steinbeck.

Verse: The Wild Traveller - Nan Joyce; In Memory of My Mother - Patrick Kavanagh; The Hired Man - Robert Frost; A Boy's Head - Miroslav Holub; Lucy - Wordsworth; It Was Long Ago - Eleanor Farejo-n; A Gentleman - Edward Thomas; Not Waving But Drowning - Stevie Smith; Danny Murphy - James Stephens.

Extracts from novels e.g. Dickens - Mrs. Gamp in 'Martin Chuzzlewit'; Steinbeck - George and Lennie in 'Of Mice and Men'.  
Media - Episode of a Soap Opera.

SEQUENCE OF CLASSES

- i. Picture of face/person  
Text - extract (e.g. Dickens) describing a character and suggesting personality
- Oral: Class discussion **of what the picture tells.**  
Oral: Discuss use of **words for bias/emotional effect**
- Write: List of characteristics for wanted poster.  
Write (i) Three sentences describing a man who is to be the hero of a story (Do not say he is the hero). (2) Three sentences describing a man who is to be the villain of a story. (3) A pen portrait of someone in the class
- Pictures - Advertisements for shampoo
- Oral: Discuss denotation and connotation
- Write: This picture moves into action and a short film starts. Tell the story.

- |    |   |   |  |
|----|---|---|--|
| 2. | The Wild Traveller -<br>Nan Joyce   | Oral: Respond to poem<br>in discussion  | Write: Questions<br>from a journalist<br>for magazine article  |
| 3. | Newspaper Article on<br>Itinerants  | Oral: Identify<br>information given.<br>Discuss writer's<br>attitude to topic.  | Write: A letter to<br>the paper about the<br>article (emphasise<br>correctness for<br>publication).  |
| .  | My Oedipus Complex -<br>Frank O'Connor  | Oral: Groups discuss<br>the story. Improvised<br>drama - father talks<br>to friend about his<br>difficulties  | Write: Mother's<br>letter to her sister<br>about her problems<br>with Larry and her<br>husband. (Letter<br>format).  |
|    | In Memory of My Mother<br>Patrick Kavanagh  | Oral: Respond to poem<br>in discussion  | Write: Impression of<br>mother and her<br>world.   |
|    | Episode from a soap<br>opera  | Oral: Discuss family<br>relationships<br>revealed.  |  |
| 4. | The Hired Man - Robert<br>Frost   | Oral: Dramatized<br>reading of text   | Write: In pairs,<br>script the woman's<br>conversation with<br>her daughter when<br>she tells her about<br>the incident. Use<br>this dialogue in a<br>paragraph from a<br>story. (Pu,~ctuation,<br>direct speech). |
| 5. | Watch film or read<br>novel:<br>Walkabout - James<br>Vance Marshall<br>The Red Pony - John<br>Steinbeck   | Oral: Discus the main<br>character and how he<br>or she changes, the<br>relationship with<br>other characters, and<br>how some characters<br>are more fully drawn<br>than others. | Write: Keep a record<br>of character<br>development during<br>the novel.   |
| 6. | A Boy's Head -<br>Miroslav Holub.<br>Lucy - Wordsworth.<br>It Was Long Ago -<br>Eleanor Farejohn.<br>Not Waving But<br>Drowning - Stevie<br>Smith | Oral: Readings of<br>poems. Note sounds<br>and rhythms. Respond<br>to poems in<br>discussion.   | Write: A poem about<br>a friend or<br>relative.  |

(Devised by Lorna Gault, Ursuline Convent School, Sligo).

SAMPLE UNIT 7 - A Fiction Unit

THE IRON MAN by TED HUGHES

1ST YEAR

AESTHETIC AND IMAGINATIVE CONTEXTS	POSSIBLE LANGUAGE ASSIGNMENTS	SUPPLEMENTARY MATERIALS
i. Dramatic style: sound and rhythm of words	Dramatic reading by groups of students	WARM BABIES - K. Preston (poem); DANIEL JAZZ - V. Lindsay (poem)
2. Images and illustrations	Collect photos and illustrations from papers etc. - make out titles, headlines or summary of event	Reading pictures and cartoons
3. Good story-telling: tension and climax	Tell (or write) a ghost-story	Video of TV thriller - conversation and discussion
4. Iron Man and dragon: great conflicts in our world	Read war-story	YOUR ATTENTION PLEASE - Peter Porter (poem)
5. Iron Man: giving directions and commands	Write out the instructions you think the Iron Man gave to Hogarth	Read carefully instruction leaflet for operating any appliances
6. As modern myth: interpretation	Give personal understanding of text	Read other myths e.g. THE CYCLOPS and ODYSSEUS; THESEUS AND THE MINOTAUR

SAMPLE UNIT 8 - A Short Story Unit

OUTLINE UNIT	ANIMALS IN LITERATURE	2ND/3RD YEARS
AESTHETIC AND IMAGINATIVE CONTEXTS	POSSIBLE LANGUAGE ASSIGNMENTS	SUPPLEMENTARY MATERIALS
i. Read His First Flight creation of viewpoint through sensuous details: animal as hero	Description of animal from two contrasting viewpoints	Read The Rockfish; contrast with His First Flight
2. Contrast of man and animal. The Wren's Nest: story shape	Nature diary for a week: record and comment on interactions observed	Snake: group presentation of poem
3. Animal as symbol: The Trout Romance v. Realism	Discussion on attitudes to animals in popular entertainment	Animals as used in Advertisements, T.V., film
4. Animal in satire and humour. Down with Pigeons	Write animal caricature of any public figure	Extracts from Animal Farm
5. Discussion on variety of approaches possible to animals in literature: contrast and evaluate approaches	Write animal story from particular viewpoint in chosen approach	Read other students' stories comment on approach.
6. Private reading	Oral presentation of book review to class	

Optional private reading during this Unit

The Midnight Fox by Betsy Byars  
The Red Pony by John Steinbeck  
Kes by Barry Hines  
Watership Down by Richard Adams  
Ring of Bright Water by Gavin Maxwell  
Tarka the Otter by Henry Williamson  
My Family and Other Animals by Gerard Durrell

SAMPLE UNIT 9 - A Poetry Unit

OUTLINE UNIT	NARRATIVE VERSE	2ND/3RD YEARS
AESTHETIC AND IMAGINATIVE CONTEXTS	POSSIBLE LANGUAGE ASSIGNMENTS	SUPPLEMENTARY MATERIALS
i. Trad. Ballad; dramatic details and dialogue in Sir Patrick Spens.	Write short dialogue based on events in poems: redraft poems as short plays in three scenes	Rosabelle: dramatised reading in groups
2. Modern social ballad e.g. Sacho and Venzetti The Band played Waltzing Matilda, Timothy Winters	Discuss issues raised in Ballad; role-play as characters. Select issue for Ballad treatment attempt version	Contrast in theme and approach The Ballad of Reading Gaol and The Ballad of the Breadman (Causley)
3. The Quarry (Auden) Dramatic intensity achieved through unity of time, place and action	Create context for events. Write short radio play with this ballad as central episode	Listen to recording of short play. Discuss approach and techniques.
4. The Highwayman as Romantic melodrama: Style and effects achieved	Write description of contemporary 'soap' plot. Write or present short scene in class	Collect accounts of sensational events as reported in press. Comment on style and approach.
5. Morte D'Arthur: Atmosphere and Mood	Research and tell to class an Arthurian legend	Discuss Oral story telling

SAMPLE UNIT 10 - A Fiction Unit

IIIIICKLKBERRY Fllil~ by MarkTwain

2ND/3RD YEARS

IMAGINATIVE & AESTHETIC CONTEXTS	POSSIBLE LANGUAGE ASSIGNMENTS	SUPPLEMENTARY TEXTS AND MATERIALS: (To be used at the teacher's discretion for fuller exploration of a context and as a stimulus for student's work)
i. Relationship of Huck, Tom and Jim: friendship, loyalty, betrayal	Newspaper or documentary account of <b>a betrayal - real or imagined - for presentation to class/audience</b>	Read and discuss: GUESTS OF THE NATION F. O'Connor (story); Teacher read: Extract from THE GREAT GILLY HOPKINS - K. Paterson (novel); Presentation to class/audience
2. Huck and Jim - attitudes to supernatural: superstitions, ghosts	Compose ghost-story set in local community and environment	Readings from an anthology of ghost-stories; local anecdotes and superstitions (oral)
3. General style of novel - ironic language use: parody and satire	Write dialogue parodying a TV personality's style or a specific newspaper's style	THE PLANSTER'S VISION - J. Betjeman (poem); MACAVITY - T.S. Eliot (poem). Language use in the press or a specific TV programme
4. Huck's "stretchers": tall stories and fantastic inventions	Make up advertisement for new fantasy invention; display poster or TV advert or radio advert	Read and discuss: THE DIAMOND MAKER - H.G.Wells (story); THE GREEN DOOR - O. Henry (story)
5. "Duke" and "King" episodes: humour and melodrama	Describe and evaluate in a review article an episode of a TV soap opera	Discuss approach of: (a) TV comedy (b) 'Soap' operas
5. Grangerford's and Sheperdson's feud; Jim's experience as a black	Class debate on: PREJUDICE IN OUR COMMUNITY. Write ballad/story on "Being left out"	Read and present: Extract from ROMEO AND JULIET - W. Shakespeare - (oral); Interpret - negro spirituals or freedom songs; TELEPHONE CONVERSATION - W.Soyinka (poem); MY PARENTS KEPT ME FROM CHILDREN WHO WERE ROUGH - S. Spender (poem)

Optional Private Reading

- (a) Roll of Thunder, Hear my Cry - Mildred Taylor
- (b) The Cay - T. Taylor
- (c) Across the Barricades - J. Lingard
- (d) To Kill a Mocking Bird - Harper Lee
- (e) A Separate Peace - J. Knowles
- (f) How Man~ Miles to Bab~lon - J. Johnston
- (g) The Great Ghilly Hopkins - K. Paterson

SAMPLE UNIT II - A Drama Unit

**DRAMA: SECOND YEAR**

**Theme: Youth and Age**

Imaginative and Aesthetic Contexts:

The imaginative contexts for this unit include the recognition of the needs and the problems of old age both in themselves and in how they relate to children. The aesthetic contexts include the recognition of the shaping of the experience into different literary forms and the translation of personal or imagined experience into one or more of those forms.

Core Text:

The Granny Project by Anne Fine from the Plays Plus Series. (Books in this series each contain a play text and a great many suggestions for work based on the text).

LANGUAGE ASSIGNMENTS	THE CORE TEXT	POSSIBLE SUPPLEMENTARY MATERIALS
Textual Analysis	The play, which is adapted from a novel centres on children and the family difficulties they encounter with their grandmother	
Analysis of dramatic form and construction (plot, character, tension, climax, etc.)	Suggested activities - given in the book around the play text are:	Vanity by Daniel Corkery
Extrapolation from known to unknown	Drama based on the script	First Confession by Frank O'Connor
The difference between the story and drama	Written and spoken personal versions of the plot	Among the Ruins by Brian Friel
Diary/Narrative/Report	Versions of Granny's life	Base Details by Siegfried Sasson. A Christmas Childhood by Patrick Kavanagh
Improvisation, sayings, proverbs, appropriate word usage	Created personalised brainstorming	The Weavers by James Stephens
Written and verbal description and observation	Character Studies	To a Child Dancing in the Wind by W.B. Yeats
Comparative analysis	Old age in Literature (7 poems or prose extracts are given)	
Building a picture of one individual through a life time	Your own Granny Project	

TEXTS: All supplementary texts are from Exploring English 1 and 3.

CORE TEXT: The Granny Project by Rosemary Fine from the Plays Plus Series, Collins Educational, 1986, Price (December 1988) IR£2.55.

(Devised by Emilie Fitzgibbon, GRAFFITI Theatre in Education Company, Cork).

SAMPLE UNIT 12 - A Drama Unit

The Merchant of Venice- W. Shakespeare 2ND/3RD YEAR HIGHER LEVEL

The core of this Unit is a close, careful reading of the play.

AESTHETIC AND IMAGINATIVE CONTEXTS	LANGUAGE ASSIGNMENTS ORAL AND WRITTEN	SUPPLEMENTARY MATERIAL
Justice/Mercy/Law dogmatism and human values	Re-enactment of the court scene. Write the speech for defence and the speech for the prosecution.	Short story The Majesty of the Law Occurrence at Owl Creek Bridge
	Newspaper report of trial - a sensationalised report and a factual report.	Speech from the Dock, Meagher
	Write a tabloid newspaper report of Portia's father's will complete with headlines	
Character Analysis	Learn by heart some major speeches and deliver them paying attention to meaning, phrasing, pauses, tone etc.	Video of play (BBC television)
Animal imagery to dehumanise	Concept of loaded and neutral words e.g. scrawny/slim. Selectivity of all language use.	(Poetry) Unknown Citizen Prayer before Birth
Concept of the stereotype. Shylock the standard jew.	Write description of stereotypical American, Irishman, German, Frenchman, teacher, politician, farmer. Write a character sketch of one of these from real life and compare.	Poetry The Squire The Miller My Parents Kept Me From Children Who Were Rough
Money/Love themes Bussario/Portia/Antonio's wealth. Shylock's obsessive attitude. Concept of Fate.	Write a story of Shylock's life including his life preceding and subsequent to the play.	Historical enquiry into jewish race - Christianity, banking. England at the time of Elizabeth - new prosperity, travel.
Lancelot-and-Gobbo linguistic pretensions	Study concepts of accent, dialect, slang, jargon, received standard. Use of tape recorder.	

Optional reading: To Kill a Mockingbird; The Diary of Anne Frank.

SAMPLE UNIT 13 - A Drama Unit

Henry IV by W. Shakespeare

2ND/3RD YEAR

IMAGINATIVE & AESTHETIC  
CONTEXTS

POSSIBLE LANGUAGE  
ASSIGNMENTS

SUPPLEMENTARY TEXTS AND  
MATERIALS (To be used  
at the teacher's  
discretion for fuller  
exploration of a context  
and as a stimulus for  
students' work)

- |  |  |  |
|--|--|--|
| i. Hotspur and Hal: heroes and villains: ideals and motives    | Compare the different kinds of language these two characters use. Discursive essay: "There are no heroes anymore"                                      | (i) THE HIGHWAYMAN - A. Noyes (poem);<br>(2) Newspaper items on courage of all kinds: discuss the language used to describe events;<br>(3) Film: A MAN FOR ALL SEASONS |
| 2. Falstaff - humour and farce: black comedy                   | Interview Falstaff. Make out wanted notices for each member of the gang: invent short biography and criminal record (based on text as far as possible) | THE SECRET LIFE OF WALTER MITTY - J. Thurber (story).  |
| 3. Glendower - legends and myths                               | Write a mythical exploration in story-form for any contemporary natural event  | WELSH INCIDENT - Robert Graves (poem)  |
| 3. Henry IV and Hal - father and son/power politics and people | Write dialogue or scene of other characters view of this father and son role friendship  | THE WEB - James Plunkett (story)   |
| 5. Shakespeare's theatre                                       | Write description of interpretative stage-set for some scenes. Suggest a range of interpretative costumes for major characters throughout the play     | The BBC Television Shakespeare HENRY IV PI   |
| 6. Chosen scenes e.g. Gadshill/robbery; final battle           | Group readings and presentation. Write press accounts of these chosen scenes   | Discussion of interpretative approaches. Realism v. symbolism  |

For optional private reading by pupils during this unit

- (a) Catch 22 - J. Heller
- (b) The Good Soldier Svejk - I. Hasek
- (c) The Human Factor - G. Greene
- (d) I am the Cheese - R. Cormier
- (e) The Spy who Came in from the Cold - J. Le Carte

SAMPLE UNIT 14 - Mass Media

Introduction to Media Studies

Introduction to Media Studies is designed for first year students and hopes to encourage them to begin to think and talk about the media as products/processes. Through a range of linguistic exercises it aims to develop:

- i. Basic cognitive skills, in terms of media.
2. The understanding of underlying media concepts
  - media/medium
  - broadcast media
  - print media
  - images/visuals
  - selection
  - construction
3. The awareness of personal, social and cultural facets of the media -
  - student's own interaction with the media
  - peer group consumption/preference/opinions
  - views/judgements of consumption patterns of other subgroups

Aesthetic and Imaginative Contexts	Possible Language Assignments	Supplementary Material
I. Pervasiveness and Persuasiveness of the media.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• In-class survey and discussion of media consumption and preference.</li><li>• Write a description of the media for people from Mars.</li><li>• Debate: Younger children should be allowed watch whatever they like on TV.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• (TITLE) was a popular story/play what does it share with television stories/plays today?</li></ul>
2. Mass Media	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Describe a 'medium' for the class without using certain key words.</li><li>• Write two letters about an issue, one to a newspaper, another to a friend; how do they differ in style, content?</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Discuss the poems of a selected writer. Which modern mass medium would best popularise them?</li><li>• Does a TV Soap have an author, like a short story has?</li></ul>

Aesthetic and Imaginative Contexts	Possible Language Assignments	Supplementary Material
3. The Power of the Image•	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Write the story of a TV ad - compare with the class. How is it similar to a short story?</li><li>• What does it share with the news on TV?</li><li>• Write an outline for the next episode of your favourite soap/serial•</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Expand a poem into a short TV drama.</li><li>• Describe one image that would best express the sentiments in a poem/story/film.</li></ul>
4. The Media Make the News: Selection/ Construction•	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Given a list of possible articles, write headlines and by-lines and arrange them for the front page of a newspaper•</li><li>• Discuss your selection and what you left out.</li><li>• Listen to a radio news and compare the selection of items with front page of newspaper• Compare headlines across the newspapers that deal with the same topic - choice and use of words and typeface•</li></ul>	Take a 'nasty' character from a novel or story and write a sympathetic description of him/her. Construct a sensational news item from a selected poem.

(Adapted from Unit devised by Irish Film Institute).

SAMPLE UNIT 15 - Mass Media

**ADVERTISING**

'Advertising' is designed to follow on the Introduction to Media Studies Unit for 1st year students. Through a range of linguistic exercises focusing on advertising, it aims to develop:

- I. Basic cognitive skills, in terms of media.
2. The understanding of fundamental media concepts -
  - denotation
  - connotation
  - anchorage
  - preferred reading
  - target audience
  - representation
3. The awareness of personal, social and cultural facets of the media -
  - range of media products in society
  - personal consumption of media products
  - personal/social preference for media products
  - media as a source of pleasure
  - cultural-specific elements in the media

The unit is designed to encourage the use of a wide range of media formats as is feasible - magazines, newspapers, record/book sleeves, comics, bill board reproduct[ions, radio, television, video as well as integrating literary texts (drama, poetry, novels).

Duration of the course would be approximately 6 weeks.

Aesthetic and Imaginative Contexts	Possible Language Assignments	Supplementary Material
i. Favourite/worst advertisement: range of ads across the media; aesthetic, personal, cultural preferences.	. Individual/group oral selection and justification of favourite/worst ads from a selection of media; . Class discussion	Survey of ad consumption - school/home
2. Composition/style of images/messages denoted/connoted.	• Oral/written analysis checklists of contents and technical composition of selected images. . Description of messages both explicit and implicit.	

Aesthetic and Imaginative Contexts	Possible Language Assignments	Supplementary Material
3. Context and target audience for an advertisement.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>. Select or compose an ad. to sell a product;</li><li>. Organise a presentation to sell your ad to the company concerned - explain where it would appear and who it would be aimed at.</li></ul>	
4. Representation in advertising images	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Find a character in a number of TV ads that you think is a stereotype - list the shared features of each ad.</li><li>• Select a character from a play as a model to sell a product - explain your choice.</li></ul>	School book covers - how do they represent the subject and attract students.
5. The moving image	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Select a TV programme and watch the credit sequence.</li><li>• Organise and write a description of how it sells a programme.</li><li>• Develop a credit sequence to suit a novel describe how it would attract a particular audience.</li></ul>	Compare a video 'teaser' and the fly cover of a novel - do they give the same information?

(Adapted from unit devised by Irish Film Institute).

SELECT BIBLIOGRAPHY ON THE TEACHING OF ENGLISH

GENERAL WORKS

Teaching the Universe of Discourse,  
(Houghton) J. Moffett.

Language and Learning, (Penguin)  
J. Britton.

Literature as Exploration, (Heinemann)  
L. Rosenblatt.

Literacy, Society and Schooling,  
(Cambridge) Edit. S. de Costell et al.

Teaching Literature 9 - 14, (Oxford)  
M. Benton & G. Fox.

Out in the Open - a secondary English  
curriculum, (Cambridge) G. Blanchard.

TEACHING OF FICTION

Developing Response to Fiction, (Open  
University) R. Proterough.

Encounters with Books, (Methuen)  
D. Jackson.

TEACHING OF POETRY

Words large as Apples, (Cambridge)  
M. Hayhoe & S. Parker.

Teaching Poetry in the Secondary School,  
(Arnold) V. O'Brien.

Poetry Experience, (Methuen)  
S. Tunnicliffe.

TEACHING OF DRAMA

Any texts by: Gavin Bolton, Dorothy  
Heathcote, Cecily O'Neill.

A practical guide to Drama in the  
Secondary School, (Wardlock) D. Self.

Drama in the English Classroom (Methuen)  
K. Byran.

Teaching Shakespeare, (Arnold)  
V O'Brien.

TEACHING OF TALKING

Encouraging Talk, (Methuen) L.  
Knowles AND LISTENING Hearsay, (Scottish  
H.M.S.O.) D. Northcroft.

Speak Out! (Bell & Hyman Ltd.) Thompson.

Dialogues & Situations for Secondary  
Schools, (Heinemann) Byran & Dube.

TEACHING OF READING

Perspectives on Reading, (The Glendale  
Press) D. Swarm.

TEACHING OF WRITING

The Writing of Writing (O.U.P.)  
A. Wilkinson.

The Quality of Writing (O.U.P.)  
A. Wilkinson.